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THE

WANDERING JEW

BY

MONCURE DANIEL CONWAY

AUTHOR OF "DEMONOLOGY AND DEVIL-LORE"

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PREFACE.

It might be offered as a sufficient reason for writing this book that no other treatise on the same subject exists in our language. But to this it may be added, that in pamphlets that have appeared in other languages, the relations of the Legend with Eastern mythology have been little considered, and its connection with Hebrew and Christian mythology almost ignored. Furthermore, those studies of the Legend which I have read consider it mainly as a curiosity. But the subject, as it appears to me, possesses a larger significance. Even the poems and romances it has suggested fail to render the still sad music of humanity pervading the variations of the folk-tale itself.

The Legend of the "Wandering Jew" is an example of how the folk-tale may sometimes be a mirror brought by Truth from the bottom of her well—the heart of the child-like world—wherein may be seen by reflection things that few eyes can look upon directly. The splendours now gathered around a triumphant Christ conceal from many the face of the changeling really there. But children, fools,

and folk-lore speak the truth. The modern French song says, "Jesus, who is goodness itself, sighing said, Thou shalt march till Judgment Day." There is a touch of sceptical sophistication here. But among the many earlier songs, ballads, stories, there is not one which betrays the faintest suspicion of anything in the curse on the Wanderer not characteristic of Jesus. No one tried to soften the case. Another widespread legend relates that once when Jesus begged bread of a baker, the dough prepared for him was reduced, before being placed in the oven, by the baker's daughter; whereupon Jesus taught her the beauty of kindness by changing her into a deathless owl. Ophelia murmurs: "They say the owl was a baker's daughter. Lord, we know what we are, but know not what we may be." These last words would not have been inappropriate for the owl to address to a Christ whose transformation her own reflected. Is this only a fantastic tale? It is coinage of the creed that a human word or action may find its fair measure in ages of penalty. In it is the fictitious equation of every theology which unites ancient divinities not subject to moral laws with human ideals. The sacerdotal sorcery which for the lover of enemies substituted a curser of enemies is discoverable in the earliest Christian theology; but the working out of it among the masses is not told in histories. The true record remains to be written, and the materials for it are indestructibly preserved in such legendary lore as this of the Wandering Jew.

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Champfleury - Histoire de l'imagerie populaire
Paris 1886

Baring Gould Curious Myths of the Middle Ages
Lon. 1892

Choice Notes from Notes and Queries Vol on Folk Lore
Lon 1859 p150
Chapter on The Wandering Jew in England

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Eugene Sue The Wandering Jew.

Dupont La Legende du Juif Errant - a
long ballad - 12 fine woodcuts
by Gustave Doré - folio Paris 1856.

THE WANDERING JEW.

THE WANDERING JEW.

I.

THE LEGEND.

IN the year 1228, an Armenian bishop visited England; and the purport of his conversation is recorded in the *Historia Major*, begun by Roger de Wendover and completed (anno 1259) by Matthæus Parisius. The interviews between the monks and the Armenian took place at St. Albans, through Henri Spigurnel, a French interpreter, a native of Antioch and servant of the bishop; and if the replies of the Eastern prelate were rightly rendered, his tendency to the marvellous was sufficiently strong. He was asked, for instance, whether he had seen Noah's Ark, said to be still preserved on an Armenian mountain,

and he replied "Yes." He was also asked whether he knew anything of "the famous Joseph," so much discussed, said to have been preserved from the time of the crucifixion of Christ, as a witness of that event. The interpreter said that the personage in question had dined with his master shortly before they left Armenia, and then gave the story as follows. The name of the wonderful Jew was originally Cartaphilus, and he was Pilate's doorkeeper at the time of Christ's trial. When the young men were leading Jesus out from the hall of judgment, this doorkeeper struck him on the neck, and said, "Go, Jesus; go on faster: why dost thou linger?" Jesus turned, and answered, "I will go, but thou shalt remain waiting until I come." (Here is quoted Matt. xxvi. 24: "The Son of man goeth as it is written of Him; but woe unto that man by whom the Son of man is betrayed! it had been good for that man if he had not been born.") Thenceforth Cartaphilus has been waiting. He was thirty years when he insulted Christ, and whenever he reaches the age of one hundred he faints; on his recovery he finds himself as young as when his doom was pronounced. (Which, again, reminds the Chronicler of a text, Ps. ciii. 5: "Thy youth is renewed like the eagle's;" and no doubt he was coming near a myth to

which this item of the story is related, that of the Phœnix.) It was further related that Cartaphilus had been baptized by Ananias (who baptized Paul) under the name of Joseph. He lives among eminent Christians in Armenia as a holy man; relates to them and to others who visit him, sometimes from great distances, much concerning the Apostles: he never smiles, but sometimes weeps; refuses gifts, is frugal, and talks little. He hopes for final forgiveness, because he knew not what he did. The Chronicle adds that this story was attested by Richardus de Argentomio, who visited the East.

The same archbishop is quoted for the story told in the *Chronique rimée* of Philippe de Mousket, born 1220, Bishop of Tournai in 1682. When the Jews were leading Jesus to execution, "this man" (no name is given) said, "Wait for me: I also am going to see the false prophet fastened to the cross." Jesus turned upon him and said, "They will not wait for thee, but thou shalt wait for me." This man would seem to have been a Jew, whereas Cartaphilus was a Roman.

These are the earliest written records of the legend of the Wandering Jew. From that time no trace of it appears until the year 1547, when an individual seems to have appeared in Hamburg, pretending to be the Wandering Jew himself. The legend and its

representative appeared in German annals simultaneously. The fullest account is in a work published 1613: *Newe Zeitung von einem Juden von Jerusalem, Ahasuerus genannt, welcher die Creutzigung unsers Herrn Jhesu Christi gesehen, und noch am leben ist, aus Dantzig an einem guten Freund geschrieben.* The name appended to this narrative is "Herr Chrysostomus Duduläus Westphalus," which Grässe believes a pseudonym. The author, however, embodies statements made in an earlier work: *Strange Report of a Jew, born at Jerusalem, named Ahasuerus, who pretends he was present at the crucifixion of Christ. Newly printed at Leyden, Leipzig*, 1602. From the same source came, *True likeness of the whole form of a Jew, seen by all, from Jerusalem, who pretends, etc. First printed at Augspurg*, 1619. The narrative of Westphalus is as follows:

"Paulus von Eizen, Doctor and Bishop of Schleswig, related to me, some years ago, that at the time he was studying at Wittenberg, while on a visit to his parents at Hamburg, in 1547, he had seen in church, placed near the chancel, a very tall man, with hair falling on his shoulders, barefoot, who listened to the sermon with great attention; and whenever the name of Jesus was mentioned, bowed humbly, smote his breast, and sighed. His only clothing was a pair

of trousers, ragged at the ends, and a coat tied with a cord which fell to his feet. He appeared to be fifty years of age. There seem to have been many of the nobility and gentry who have seen this man, in England, France, Italy, Hungary, Persia, Spain, Poland, Moscow, Lieffland, Sweden, Denmark, and Scotland, and in other regions. Everyone has marvelled much at him. And the aforenamed Doctor, having made inquiries as to where he could converse with this man, and having found him, asked him whence he came, and how long he had been there during that winter. On this the man very humbly told him that he was by birth a Jew of Jerusalem, named Ahasuerus, his occupation that of a shoemaker; that he had been present at the crucifixion of Christ, since which time he had been alive; that he had travelled through many countries and cities; and to prove that he was telling the truth, he had knowledge of various events which had occurred since that time, as well as of all the events which had happened to Christ when he was brought before Pilate and Herod and finally crucified. He told even more than we know through the evangelists and historians; and he narrated the many changes of government, especially in Eastern countries, which had occurred at one time or another during those many centuries. Then he related most

minutely the life, sufferings, and death of the holy Apostles. And now, when Dr. Paulus of Eizen, with great interest and astonishment, had heard these things, in order to obtain more thorough knowledge, he asked him to relate exactly all that happened. Thereupon this man answered that, at the time of the crucifixion, he resided in Jerusalem, and like others he regarded Christ as a heretic; he had not thought of him otherwise than as a misleader of the people; and that with others he had endeavoured to get one who in his eyes was a rebel out of the world. Soon after the sentence had been pronounced by Pilate, they led Jesus past his house. Knowing that he would be led that way, he (Ahasuerus) had gone home, and told all in his house that they might see Jesus pass by and would know what kind of man he was. Just as Jesus was passing, he took a child in his arms and stood before his own door. Christ, bearing a very heavy cross on his shoulders, stopped a little before the shoemaker's door and leaned against the wall. Then the shoemaker, full of sudden anger, and also desirous of public applause, told Christ to move on whither he was ordered. Upon this, Christ looked sternly upon him, and said, 'I will stand here and rest, but thou shalt move until the last day!' Upon this, he put the child down quickly on

the floor, and could stay there no longer. He followed Jesus, saw him miserably crucified, tortured, and slain. After all had been fulfilled, it was impossible for him to enter Jerusalem. He never saw his wife and child again, but as a sad pilgrim has wandered through foreign countries one after another. When after many years he returned once more to Jerusalem, he found everything sacked and destroyed, so that he could recognise nothing: not one stone was left upon another, nor any trace of the former magnificence visible. What God now intended to do with him, in leaving him in this miserable life wandering about in such wretchedness, he could not explain otherwise than that God wished him to remain until the Day of Judgment as a living sign against the Jews, by which the unbelieving and the godless might be reminded of Christ's death and be turned to repentance. For his part he would be very happy if God would take him to heaven out of this vale of tears.

"After this report and conversation, Dr. Paulus of Eizen asked, as also did the School-Inspector of Hamburg, who was learned in ancient histories, the right account of all sorts of things which had occurred in Eastern countries after Christ's birth and crucifixion. This man gave a very good and exact report of all these ancient events: so that people were obliged

to believe in him and his story, and went away astonished, and saying, that with God all things are possible—but with man they are inscrutable.

"As to this Jew's life it was very quiet and retired. He did not talk much, and only when asked a question; and when invited into a house, he did not eat or drink much, being abstemious. He never stayed long in one place. At Hamburg, Dantzig, and elsewhere, when money was offered, he only accepted two shillings, which soon after he gave to the poor, with the remark that he did not need any money; that the good God would provide for him because he was penitent for his sin; and what he had ignorantly done he would submit to God. None ever saw him laugh. In whatever country he entered he knew the language at once. At that time he spoke the Saxon language as one born there. Many people came to Hamburg, from neighbouring and even distant places, to see and listen to this man, and believed that something marvellous was indicated by him, because he was not only attentive to the Word of God but showed great reverence, and sighed whenever the name of God or Christ was pronounced. He could never hear anyone utter a curse. Whenever the name or torture or sufferings of God were connected by any excited person with a curse, he would sigh deeply,

and say, 'Miserable man, miserable creature! wilt thou take lightly the name of thy Lord and God, and of his great suffering and torture? Hadst thou seen it as I did, hadst thou seen how hard the wound of thy Saviour was for thee and me, thou wouldst rather do a great harm to thyself than pronounce his name lightly.' All these things Dr. Paulus of Eizen told me with truth and sincerity, with many other true circumstances, which, since then, I have heard from several old friends who also saw the same man at Hamburg with their own eyes. Which things, also, Paul of Eizen saw, and has told with truth and earnestness.

"Anno 1575. The Secretary Christoph Krause and Magistrate Jacobus von Holstein had been sent as ambassadors to the Royal Court of Spain, and afterwards to the Netherlands, in order to pay the soldiers who served in the royal [army]; and when they had returned home again, being near Schleswig, they solemnly related that they had seen this wonderful man in Spain, with the identical appearance, costume, manners, and mode of life. They had spoken to him personally; and said that at the same time many besides themselves heard him speak good Spanish.

"Anno 1599. In Christ's month, a very trust-

worthy person wrote from Brunswick to Strasburg that this wonderful man was then in Vienna, in Austria, and that he intended to go from thence into Poland and Dantzig, and after that to Moscow. This Ahasuerus has been at Lubeck in 1601. And also at Reffel in Lieffland, and in Cracow, Poland. He was seen and spoken to by many people in Moscow.

"What now sensible men shall think of all this I leave to themselves. The providences of God are marvellous, inscrutable, inexplicable; as time goes on they will become more so; and they will only be revealed to us at the last day.

"*Dated at Reffel, the first of August*, 1613.—CHRYSOSTOMUS DUDULÄUS WESTPHALUS."

Other notices of the Wandering Jew are as follows. Nicolas Heldvaler (*Sylva Chronol. Circuli Baltici*) says:

"This year (1604) there has appeared a fable of a Jew who is said to have been a shoemaker in Jerusalem in the time of Christ, and having on Good Friday struck Jesus with his shoe-last, cannot die, but must wander about the world till the last day."

Rodolphe Bouthrays (Botereius), Parliamentary Advocate of Paris (in his *Commentarii de Rebus Historicis in Gallia et toto pene Orbe gestis*, Lib. xi., 1604), mentions the report as wide-spread in his time. The following is a translation from his Latin:

"I am afraid that some may charge me with anile trifling, if I insert in this page the story which is told in the whole of Europe, concerning a Jew, a contemporary of the Saviour Christ. Nothing, however, is more widely-spread, and the vernacular history of our own countrymen has not blushed to declare it. Thus I have, as witnesses, those who formerly wrote our Annals . . . that he, not in one century [only] had been seen and recognised in Spain, Italy and Germany, but that this year it was he himself who was seen at Hamburg, anno 1564. Many other things the vulgar imagine about him, as it is prone to rumours; which I relate, lest anything should remain untold."

The following is a translation from the Latin of Julius Cæsar Bulenger (*Historiarium sui Temporis Libri*, Leyden, 1619):

"It was reported at that time that a Jew, a contemporary of Christ, who for more than a thousand years had been a vagrant and a wanderer over the whole world, was still wandering about without meat and drink, having been condemned to that punishment by God, because he was the first of the dregs of the circumcised to cry out that Christ should be fixed to the Cross, and that Barabbas the robber should be released from the hook and the terror of the Cross.

Afterwards, when Christ, panting from the weight of the Cross, would have rested at his workshop, for he was a mechanic, he ordered Him off with bitter words. To whom Christ said, Because thou begrudgest me so little rest, I will rest; and thou without rest shalt wander. And it is told that presently, in less time than the telling occupies, the man wandered frantic and aimless throughout the whole city, that thence his wanderings continue over the whole world even to this present day, and that it was the very man who was seen at Hamburg in the year 1564. 'Credat Judæus Apella.' I did not see the man at that time, since I was occupied at Paris, nor did I hear about him from sufficiently trustworthy authorities."

Louvet mentions seeing him in 1604 at Beauvais, surrounded by a crowd of children, speaking of the Passion of Christ. He expresses regret that his contempt for the fellow prevented his interrogating. He asked and received alms at a certain house.

S. H. Bangert (*Commentatio de ortu vita et excessu Coleri Jurisconsulti Lubecensis,* Lubeck, 1644) mentions that Coler left a memorandum in his diary to the effect that "that immortal Jew, who asserted that he had been present at the crucifixion of Christ, was at Lubeck on the 14th January, 1603."

Martin Zeiler (*Historici Chronologi et Geographi*

Celebres Collecti, Ulm, 1653) mentions the Wandering Jew. Among his Letters Zeiler cites one by Westphalus, substantially the same as his account (1613) already quoted, as having been written to one of his (Westphalus') friends.

In the year 1644 the 'Turkish Spy' writes from Paris (Book III. Letter I.) to Ibraham Haly Cheik, a Man of the Law, as follows :

"There is a man come to this city, if he may be called a man, who pretends to have lived above these sixteen hundred years. They call him the Wandering Jew. But some say he is an impostor. He says of himself that he was Usher of the Divan in Jerusalem (the Jews call it the Court of Judgment), where all criminal causes were tried, at the time when Jesus, the Son of Mary, the Christian's Messias, was condemned by Pontius Pilate, the Roman President. That his name was Michob Ader; and that for thrusting Jesus out of the Hall with these words, 'Go, why tarriest thou?' the Messias answered him again, 'I go, but tarry thou till I come;' thereby condemning him to live till the Day of Judgment. He pretends to remember the Apostles that lived in those days, and that he himself was baptized by one of them; that he has travelled through all the regions of the world, and so must continue to be a vagabond

says he was in Constantinople when Soliman built that royal mosque which goes by his name. He knew Tamerlane the Scythian, and told me he was so called because he halted on one leg. He pretends also to have been acquainted with Scander-Beg, the valiant and fortunate Prince of Epirus. He seemed to pity the insupportable calamity of Bajazet, whom he had seen carried about in a cage by Tamerlane's order. He accuses the Scythian of too barbarous an insult on the unfortunate Sultan. He remembers the ancient Caliphs of Babylon and Egypt, the empire of the Saracens, and the wars in the Holy Land. He highly extols the valour and conduct of the renowned Godfrey de Bouillon. He gives an accurate account of the rise, progress, establishment and subversion of the Mamelukes in Egypt. He says he has washed himself in the two head-springs of the river Nile, which arise in the southern part of Æthiopia. That its increase is occasioned by the great rains in Æthiopia, which swell all the rivers that fall into the Nile, and cause that vast inundation to discover whose origin has so much puzzled philosophy. He says that the river Ganges in India is broader and deeper than the Nile; that the river Niger in Africa is longer by some hundreds of miles; and that he can remember a time when the river

Nile overflowed not till three months after the usual season.

"Having professed himself an universal traveller, and that there was no corner of the earth where he had not been present, I began to comfort myself with the hopes of some news from the Ten Tribes of Israel that were carried into captivity by Salmanasar, King of Assyria, and could never be heard of since. I asked him several questions concerning them, but found no satisfactory answer. Only, he told me that in Asia, Africa, and Europe he had taken notice of a sort of people who (though not Jews in profession) yet retained some characteristics whereby one might discover them to be descended of that nation. In Livonia, Russia, and Finland he had met with people of languages distinct from that of the country, having a great mixture of Hebrew words; that these abstained from swine's flesh, blood, and things strangled; that in their lamentations for the dead they always used these words: *Jeru*, *Jeru*, *Masco*, *Salem*. By which, he thought, they called to remembrance Jerusalem and Damascus, those two famous cities of Palestine and Syria. In the Circassians also he had traced some footsteps of Judaism: their customs, manner of life, feasts, marriages, and sacrifices being not far removed from the institutions of

Mosaic Law. But, what is most remarkable, he said that he had conversed with professed Jews in the north part of Asia who never so much as heard of Jesus, the son of Mary, or of the revolutions of Judea after his death, the siege and destruction of Jerusalem, or any other matters wherewith all histories abound concerning that nation. He said, moreover, that these Jews had only the Pentateuch, not having heard of the rest of those Books which compose the greatest part of the Old Testament; and that this Pentateuch was written in a sort of Hebrew far different from that which is now commonly spoken by the rest of the Jews dispersed throughout the world. That the number of these Jews was infinite. And, finally, he thought that these (if any) were the true posterity of those Ten Captive Tribes.

"Having mentioned the destruction of Jerusalem, I asked him where he was at that time? He told me, in the Court of Vespasian at Rome; and that he had heard the emperor say, when he understood the Temple of Solomon was burnt to ashes, 'he had rather all Rome had been set on fire.' Here the old man fell a-weeping himself, lamenting the ruin of that noble structure, which he described to me as familiarly as if he had seen it but yesterday. He says that Josephus wrote partially of the seditions in the

city, being related to one of the chief ringleaders, whom therefore he spared, being loth to stain the reputation of his own family to all posterity.

"I tell thee, sage Cheik, if this man's pretences be true, he is so full of choice memoirs, and has been witness to so many grand transactions for the space of sixteen centuries of years, that he may not unfitly be called 'A living Chronology,' the 'Protonotary of the Christians' Hegira,' or principal recorder of that which they esteem the last *epocha* of the world's duration. By his looks one would take him for a relic of the Old World, or one of the long-lived fathers before the Flood. To speak modestly, he may pass for the younger brother of Time.

"It would be endless to tell thee how many other discourses we had of his travels and memoirs; till, tired with his company, and judging all to be a cheat, I took my leave. I assure thee, he seems to be a man well versed in all histories, a great traveller, and one that affects to be counted an extraordinary person. The common people are ready to adore him; and the very fear of the multitude restrains the magistrates from offering any violence to this impostor.

"Live thou in the exercise of thy reason, which will not permit thee to be seduced into errors by the

subtle insinuations of men. Continue to love Mahomet, who honours thee without a fiction.

"Paris, 4th of the 1st Moon of the Year 1644."

In, or about, the year 1645 there was published in German at Augsburg the *Strange Report of a Jew who claims to have been present at the crucifixion, and to have been kept alive from that time. A theological warning to the Christian reader, illustrated and enlarged by trustworthy histories and examples.* On this book there is a picture representing a village, with trees; on the right the sun emerging from clouds; in the centre Jesus crowned with thorns, his arms stretched out; in front, the Wandering Jew kneeling with clasped hands, his hat and the Bible lying before him. On both sides, in horizontal line, runs the sentence: *From Chrysostomo Dudulæo Westphalo, written to his good friend.* On the back are some verses, the first two lines being in Latin:

"Nubibus in altis crucifixum cernit Jesum
Asverus, dignum clamitat ante cruce."

In 1681 there appeared a publication, written by Pastor J. Georg Hadeck: *Nathanieli Christiano. Relation concerning a hermit named Ahasuerus, a Jew who was present at the crucifixion, etc.*

M. Magnin in an essay prefixed to the *Ahasuerus*

of Edgar Quinet (Paris edition of 1843, p. 24) says "In 1641 an Austrian baron, and in 1643 a physician returned from Palestine, related that a certain Turk had pointed out 'Joseph' to a Venetian nobleman named Bianchi. The poor Jew was then under close guard at the bottom of a crypt in Jerusalem; he was dressed in his ancient Roman costume, exactly that of the time of Christ. He did nothing but walk about the room without saying a word, and strike his hand against the wall, or sometimes his breast, to testify his sorrow for having struck the holy face of the Lord. I find these details in an anonymous German work of the middle of the 17th century, bearing the singular title of *Relation*, or *Brief account of two living witnesses of the Passion of our Saviour.*" This was no doubt a version of the work of Droscher, *De duobus testibus vivis passionis dominicæ*, Jena, 1688. M. Gaston Paris believes this to have been a tale suggested by the Matthew Paris Chronicle, printed in London in 1571, at Zurich in 1586.

An important work appeared with the following title: *Dissertatio historica de Judæo non mortali*, etc. *Certaminis publ. argum. f. Præs. Schultz. Regiom. Pruss. respondens Martin Schmid Slavio. Pomer.* A.D. 26 *Jan. Ann.* 1689. This work contains a curious account of the Twelve Tribes, sent by a Jewish physician to his

co-religionists in Mantua; also a "trustworthy" copy of the judgment which Pilate pronounced on Christ, stating his motives, subscribed by all members of his council and officers of the Sanhedrim; with the full Notes of the Prosecutor; these having been "found in a marble rock in the city of Aquila." (This idea was used by A. W. Schlegel, in his romance on the subject.)

In 1697 a book was published at Wolffenbüttel, entitled *Description of a Hermit, a Jew* (etc.), *who brings near the evidence of Joseph concerning Christ; the history of the death of Christ; the Letter of Lentulus to the Roman Council; the condemnation of Christ; history of the broken stone; Letter of Pilate to the Emperor Tiberias; of Pilate's punishment said to have been inflicted on the Twelve Tribes of Israel for the crucifixion of Christ. With an addition concerning a Jew, a sorcerer, who gave himself out for the Messias. Collected out of respectable old histories and most trustworthy testimonies.*

In the French language there was published at Bordeaux (1609) the *True History of the Wandering Jew taken from his own lips.* The legend seems hardly to have been known in Spain, and but little in Italy, at any early date. There was printed at Bruges (where the *Chronique rimée* of Philippe de Mousket had prepared the soil for it) early in the seventeenth

century (probably) a folkbook entitled *Wonderful History of the Wandering Jew, who since the year* 33 *to this time has only wandered.*

In the English language the only early story of the Wandering Jew, after that in the Chronicle of Matthew of Paris, is the ballad contained in *Percy's Reliques.* This ballad is in black-letter in the Pepys' collection; it follows the Hamburg legend, and was probably written early in the 17th century. That the legend was well known in England in the seventeenth century appears from a satire, in which it is utilised, without being narrated, entitled *The Wandering Jew telling Fortunes to Englishmen. A Jew's Lottery. London:* printed by John Raworth, for Nathaniel Butter, 1640.

It should also be stated that there were a number of treatises written against the story, such as—1. *De duobus testibus vivis passionis Christi. Jena,* 1668 (written by S. Niemann); 2. *Meletea historia de Judæo immortali,* 1668 (written by J. Freutzel); 3. *Diss. hist. de Judæo non mortali,* 1689 (written by Martin Schmid). In the following century (1723) an anonymous pamphlet was printed, in Frankfort and Leipzig, 'concerning the Immortal Jew, in which it is shown throughout that in the nature of things he never existed." In 1756 was published C. Anton's *Diss.*

in qua lepidam fabulam de Judæo immortali examinet; followed by *An Alewife's letter to Anton, that there is a Wandering Jew.* (Halle, 1756.)

This earlier bibliography of the Wandering Jew is mainly condensed from the most important work on the antiquarian features of the legend:—*Die Sage vom Ewigen Juden, historisch entwecklt mit verwandter Mythèn verglichen und beleuchtet.* Von Dr. J. G. Th. Grässe. Dresden u. Leipzig, 1844.

In following Grässe, M. Schœbel (*La legende du Juif Errant,* Paris, 1877), and M. Gaston Paris (*Le Juif Errant,* Paris, 1880) have added important points and criticisms.

From the various books mentioned are gathered the following notes:

S. Grosse (in his "History of Leipzig") says that the Wandering Jew appeared there as a beggar in 1642, and accepted gifts, some of high value. Other traditions report that he refused presents.

It is a tradition of Matterberge, under the Matterhorn, that formerly a great city stood there; and it is said that when the Wandering Jew first came there he said: "When I come again I shall find a forest where now are houses; and when I come the third time all will be snow and ice: and this has been fulfilled."

It is said that at Naumburg (Thuringia) he could

neither sit nor stand still. Even when listening to a sermon he was always moving. He said he had "no rest by day or night, and was kept alive without food or drink, sleep or rest, for many years in a miraculous manner." It is said that, in 1640, two citizens of Brussels, walking in a wood, met a grey old man, in shabby and antique garb. They invited him to an inn, where he drank with them, standing. Before leaving, he told them of things that happened centuries before. They gathered that he was Isaac Laquedem, the Jew who forbade his Lord to rest at his door, and left him in terror.'

The presence in England of a man pretending to be the Wandering Jew is stated in a letter of Madame de Mazarin to Madame de Bouillon (Calmet, *Dict. de la Bible*, ii. 472). In England he assumed the character of one who had been an official of high rank in Jerusalem. His statements to the English noblemen and University professors who conversed with him (many of whom believed his story) were so precisely those which were given to the Turkish Spy in Paris that there is no need to reproduce them here. It is probable that the same man had journeyed from Paris to England, as it is difficult to believe that two such clever and learned impostors could appear at the same time.

It is notable that an account of the first appearance

of a personal representative of the legend should only have been published more than fifty years (certainly) after his visit to Hamburg; and then just after the death of the witness said to have conversed with him, Paul of Eizen. This prelate was born at Hamburg, 1522, and died in 1598. His alleged testimonies to the Wandering Jew were reported subsequently by the pseudonymous Duduläus. It is further remarkable that in the story as told by Duduläus, already given, nothing is said of a *blow* dealt Jesus by Ahasuerus. He evidently desires to soften the story for the Wandering Jew, and adduce him as a witness to the Christian legend. He tries in one of his pamphlets to recommend the story to sceptics by relating another of three pious miners of Bohemia, who fell into a pit at Kuttenberg. They remained there for seven years, their provisions and lamp holding out miraculously. One prayed that he might again see the light of day; another, that he might once more eat with his family; the third, that he might live one more year with his wife and children. The prayers were answered, but each died suddenly immediately after his wish was fulfilled.

The *animus* of the revival of the legend is shown by instances in which the Jews' quarters were invaded under rumours that they were concealing the Wanderer.

II.

THE UNDYING ONES.

THE myth of the Wandering Jew belongs, essentially, to a class which has great antiquity, and is found in every part of the world.

At a period before Animism had been embodied in clear conceptions of a life beyond the grave, the human heart and mind had to adapt themselves as well as they could to the King of Terrors, which destroyed the greatest as well as the humblest. The first that were ideally wrested from Death were saints and heroes; and it was necessary to find for these an earthly immortality. Many myths and legends of the undying ones are no doubt variants of each other; but they are found among races so separate in origin and history, that we may be content to find their common root in human nature. Men cannot bear to think that their leaders, heroes, saviours are really dead. They resolutely repel the

for peace and good seasons."* Here we have one chapter in the genesis of these immortals. Men have been executed in Portugal for professing to be Sebastian returned. In the time of James II., country-people in England believed that Monmouth had not really died on the scaffold, but "would suddenly appear, would lead them on to victory, and would tread down the King and the Jesuits under his feet."† Some believed him to be the Man in the Iron Mask.

On the death of King Arthur all hope of finding the Holy Graal seemed to vanish. On the "Morte d'Arthur" it is written: "This of King Arthur, I find no more written in my copy of the certainty of his death; but thus he was led away in a barge, wherein were three Queens; and one was King Arthur's sister, Queen Morgan le Fay, and there was Nimue, the chief Lady of the Lake. More of the death of King Arthur, could I never find. But that ladies brought such a one unto burials, that he was buried here, that the hermit bare witness that sometime was Bishop of Canterbury and dwelled that time in a chapel beside Glastonbury. But yet the hermit knew not, of a certain, that it was verily the body of King Arthur. Some men yet say in many

* The *Heimskringla.* Translated by Samuel Laing. Longmans, 1844. Vol. i., p. 225.

† Macaulay's "History of England," ch. viii. Fourth edition.

parts of England that King Arthur is not dead, but had, by the will of our Lord Jesus Christ, into another place. And men say that he will come again, and he shall win the Holy Cross."* That King Arthur is in the Vale of Avalon (of Apples) attended by fairies; that in some regions he has been found by shepherds slumbering, like Barbarossa, with his knights in a subterranean castle (at Sewingshields especially); that in others he has been seen, like Wodan, at the head of a ghostly hunt by night: these are legends found far and wide in British and Breton folklore. Tennyson makes Arthur repose in—

> "The island-valley of Avilion
> Where falls not hail, nor rain, nor any snow,
> Nor ever wind blows loudly; but it lies
> Deep-meadowed, happy, fair, with orchard lawns,
> And bowery hollows crowned with summer sea."

Germany has many corresponding myths, chief of which is that of Frederick I., or Barbarossa, believed to be sleeping under Raven's Hill at Kaiserlautern, ready to come forth in the last emergency (or glory and unity) of his country. There, in his palace (or

* "La Morte d'Arthur." Compiled by Sir Thomas Mallory (Conybeare's edition). Moxon, 1868, p. 404. The Cornish legend was that Arthur would return to drive the Saxons from Britain. Similar stories are told of Sir Gawaine, Ogier, and others.

grotto) underground, a shepherd once found him surrounded by his sleeping knights, all in armour ; the horses near by in harness. The red beard, which gave the hero his name, had grown through the stone table before him, and taken root in the floor. As the shepherd entered, Barbarossa awoke and asked :

"Are the ravens still flying round the hill ?"

"Yes."

"Then must I sleep another hundred years."

On the evening when the present Emperor of Germany had reviewed his troops, after his late war with France, this legend was represented before him in a series of marvellous tableaux which I witnessed. In the last it was shown that the hour had arrived for Frederick the Red Beard to come forth, and it need hardly be said that he bore a striking resemblance to the Emperor William. In some regions it is said that Frau Holda stands beside the slumbering Barbarossa : this may have helped to give us our familiar variant *The Sleeping Beauty.*

It is said that after Pope Paschal III. had made Charlemagne a saint, Otho III. (anno 997) opened that Emperor's tomb and found him seated on his throne, with his crown, imperial robe, and sceptre, and on his knees a copy of the Gospels. Beside him was his sword Joyeuse, and his pilgrim's pouch.

So Charlemagne was added to the list of holy sleepers.

In another work I have spoken of these Sleepers, and also of the Wanderers.* The list of such, too long to be given here, includes Tell, in Switzerland; Boabdil of Spain; Sebastian of Portugal; Olger Dansk; Thomas of Ercildoune, and many another, down to such præternatural if not perpetual sleepers as Rip Van Winkle, and the Abbot Cormac of Killarney, who listened two hundred years to the singing of a nightingale. The Abbot had doubted if he would not find the singing of heaven tiresome; he supposed he had listened to the bird a few moments only in the wood, but returned to find all changed. The legend has inspired one of Allingham's beautiful ballads, "The Abbot of Inisfalen." Herodotus (iv. 94) relates the tale of Zalmoxis, the Thracian, who, disgusted with the uncivilised life around him, had a subterranean hall built and there resided. Some presently believed that Zalmoxis never died; others regarded him as a god; and ultimately it became a custom of the Getans to despatch a messenger, every fifth year, to him, by hurling some man into the air and catching

* "Demonology and Devil-lore." (Index.) See Sir G. W. Cox, "Mythology of the Aryan Nations." Keightley, "Fairy Mythology," i. 74, *sq.* Folk-lore Record, ii. 1, *sq.*

him on javelins. If the victim dies Zalmoxis is propitious. Plutarch relates a story similar to this (De Defect. Orac.), as told by one Cleombrotus, concerning an Oriental personage who appeared among his fellow-men only once a year. The rest of his life was passed among friendly nymphs and demons, and as these are said to have rendered him proof against disease it may be supposed that he was one of the undying.

Similar legends are indeed found among the aboriginal races of North America. Such heroes as Booin (Nova Scotia) and Hiawatha were supposed never to have died. Booin was carried to a happy land inside a friendly whale, whom he compensated with the tobacco which the Micmacs still see smoking in the spout of that animal; and Hiawatha "sailed into the purple sunset." To these good Indians migrate when they die. The Incas of Peru also were found believing that the founder of their kingdom never died, but would return to restore its ancient splendours. The Muyscas of Bogota relate that the first lawgiver of Bochica lived among their tribe 2000 years, then "withdrew," and he is now known as Idacanzas.*

It is interesting to compare such primitive forms of

* Tylor, *Primitive Culture*, i. 318

the myth with those assumed by it amid the advanced phases of Animism. Tithonus, for whom Eos obtained the gift of immortality but not that of perpetual youth, whom divine pity changed into a grasshopper, became the proverbial title of a decrepit old man, and represents the nearest approach to an earthly immortal in Greek mythology. The immortals exist indeed, but in changed forms, or even if the human powers be preserved it must be in Hades, as in the case of Teiresias. The Glaucus-myth, running through several variants, shows the evolution of this class of myths. Surviving all ordeals in Crete—the sea, the cask of honey, the serpent's bite—he becomes on the Corinthian coast an evil ghost, and in Bœotia a marine deity. In classic ages every hero has his vulnerable point where he is sure to be touched at last.

III.

SOURCES OF THE MYTH.

ALTHOUGH, as we have seen, the myths of the undying ones are found among races so widely separate that they must often be of independent origin, many of them are ethnically related. This is the case with a series of such, now to be considered, which bear upon the fable of the Wandering Jew.

The earliest myth of this character is probably that of the Iranian Yima, King of the Golden Age in Persia. This beautiful myth is found in the Zendavesta, and in the Vendidad which Haug traces, in its earlier parts, to an antiquity not far short of Zoroaster himself, not less than a thousand years before our era. In the Zendavesta it is declared: "During the happy reign of Yima there was neither cold nor heat, neither decay nor death, nor malice produced by the demons; father and son walked

forth, each fifteen years old in appearance." With Yima was Armaiti, the divine woman, genius of the earth, who by promoting culture, recovering wildernesses and converting nomadic tribes to peaceful cultivators, expanded the earth to thrice its original size; and over this paradise Yima reigned nine hundred years. After the evils of winter had come over his country Yima led a select number of his friends to a secluded spot, where they enjoy perfect happiness.* Armaiti still, in Parsî faith, remained at her work, upholding the earth in her maternal arms, ever working against the powers of evil; and when she shall have prevailed, Yima is to come back again and lead in the Golden Year.

It is an instance of the unconscious poetry of humanity that this Iranian Yima is one with Yama, the Vedic King of the Dead! The idea may have originally been the declining sun;† but there are other characters than darkness about the sunset; there are splendours also, and often the western horizon is painted with radiant islets which to primitive man seemed a part of his planet. It may even have been that the westward course of human migration was guided by this permanent pillar of

* Haug's Essays, etc., p. 277.

† Max Müller's *Science of Language*, vol. ii. p. 563.

men], for Elohim took him." With regard to the solar character of the Enoch-myth we cannot concern ourselves here. As his name indicates Enoch is the Beginner, like Yima, of whom Ahuramazda says, "with him I conversed first among men" (Vendidad, ii. 2). It is especially noticeable that Enoch "walks" with Elohim, whom we before find "walking in the garden" (Gen. iii. 8). A heavenly abode is not yet imagined Even the Koran, when it speaks of Enoch (Erdris), hesitates to affirm his translation to heaven, but says, "We exalted him to a high place."

The evil counterpart of Enoch is Lamech, who, although his death at the age of 777 is recorded in the later Sethite line, identifies himself as a deathless wanderer with Cain in the lines which, as Ewald thinks, probably gave rise to the Cain story itself:

Adah and Zillah, hear my voice!
  Ye wives of Lamech, hearken to my speech!
For the man I slew for my own wound,
  The child I struck dead on account of my own hurt!
Was Cain avenged seven times?
  Lamech will be seven and seventy times!

In the third epoch we find Esau a restless evil wanderer, fulfilling the destiny prononnced by his father, gradually personifying Edom, the antagonist

of Israel. The corresponding immortal is Judah, from whose hand the sceptre was not to depart till Shiloh come. The death of neither of these is mentioned; Edom and Judah remained to carry on their phantasmal war to the last—as Satan and Jahve, as Sammaël and Michael.

The mysterious account, in Deut. xxxiv., of the death of Moses, suggests the existence at some period of a popular belief that he did not die in the ordinary sense. It is said, by one rendering, that he died "on the mouth of Jahve"; "his eye was not dim nor his natural strength abated"; Jahve knew him "face to face," and himself buried him in a valley, in a place unknown to this day. According to the Talmud, Enoch, Moses, and Elias, are brought up by Michael to be changed into angels. (Kalisch, Comm. on O. T., II. p. 307.) This association of Moses with the two who notoriously had not died is significant. In the Book of "The Assumption of Moses" the demon who tried to get the body of Moses, as mentioned in Jude ix., is called Sammaël. This had long been the name for Esau-Edom; and there is also in this coincidence the intimation of an early legend which brought Moses slumbering in his Moabite cave into mythological relation with restless Esau, ever wandering amid the dark mountains. The presence of Moses at the trans-

seen the man of sin, to whom the repose of the grave is forbidden. The books of our Bible were written after ancient traditions, and gathered together when other ideas were predominant; and it is rather by intimations there found, and by references to rabbinical and Arabian folk-lore, that we can get at these primitive fables.

In the first epoch we find counterparts in Cain and Seth. Even the Biblical narrative seems to point to a primitive myth, in which these two were good and evil immortals, which had gone to pieces before the book of Genesis was compiled.* At any rate at an early age the pieces had been put together by the Semitic imagination. It is said (Gen. iv. 25) that Eve called this her third son Seth (*scion* or *germ*): "for," she said, "God hath appointed me another seed in place of Abel, whom Cain slew." The Talmudic book, *Shene Luchôth*, says that the soul of Abel (*breath*) passed into Seth, and again into Moses. Josephus (*Ant.* i. 2) shows that Seth was venerated as one possessed of great knowledge, which he engraved on two pillars. Suidas says Seth was the first to hear the name of God. In the fourth century there was a

* See Ewald's *Geschichte des Volkes Israel*, i. 353 (Russell Martineau's Translation, p. 264, *sq.*). For traditions concerning Seth, see also my *Demonology and Devil-lore*, as per Index.

sect of Sethians, who, according to Epiphanius, identified Seth with the Messiah (Adv. Hær. i. 3, 39). In the line of Seth were born the long-lived beings, some of whom lived above nine hundred years, and one of whom was Enoch, who did not die at all. Many of the names resemble those in the line of Cain—and were no doubt taken from it—Cain-an, Mahalaleel, Jared, Enoch, Methuselah, Lamech. It is evident that the Seth legend was introduced to avoid having the human race descend from the first murderer and type of evil—Cain.

Cain was the first Wandering Jew. His name, signifying a spear, and Tubal-Cain, "son of a spear," first artificer in brass and iron, suggest the possibility that his doom may have been that of a Semitic Prometheus. At any rate the curse pronounced upon him ("a fugitive and a wanderer shalt thou be in the earth"); the mark (token, or perhaps *weird*) fixed upon him, that none should slay him; the land to which he wandered, itself meaning flight (Nod)—supplied ample materials for the mother-myth of eternal Wanderers. Of Cain, however, more will be said at a further stage of our inquiry.

Enoch represents the first personage of Biblical record clearly corresponding to Yima. "Enoch walked with Elohim and was no more [seen among

the Talmud) says: "Moses then summoned Samiri, and would have put him to death instantly, but Allah directed that he should be sent into banishment. Ever since that time he roams like a wild beast throughout the world; everyone shuns him and purifies the ground on which his feet have stood; and he himself, whenever he approaches men, exclaims: "Touch me not!"

In the Koran (Sale, xx.) it is declared that Moses said to Al Sâmeri, "Get thee gone; for thy punishment in this life shall be that thou shalt say unto those who shall meet thee, Touch me not!" Al Beidâwi is quoted by Sale as interpreting this to mean that infection would follow the touch, but to Al Sâmeri; ultimately, however, the fear was on the other side. It was believed that Al Sâmeri repaired to an island in the Red Sea, where his wretched descendants dwell, and whence issue plagues. Whenever a ship comes near the inhabitants raise the warning cry, "Touch me not!"

Al Beidâwi also says that Al Sâmeri's real name was Moses, or Mûsa Ebn Dhafar, which seems to suggest that he was regarded as the counterpart of Moses; and also as a source of pestilence he would be the opposite of Moses, whose medical skill was famous.

Although it may anticipate somewhat the later developments of our myth, it may be well to suggest here the probability that the traditional idea, preserved in the romance of Eugene Sue and elsewhere, that the Wandering Jew carried the plague from city to city, may have been connected with this legendary Red Sea Island. Its real origin may have been in the actual diseases bred in the wretched quarters in which Jews were crowded by a suicidal inhumanity, and from which every Jewish traveller and trader had to go.

The next undying one is Elias. The idea of Jahve's earthly abode had grown dim, at least, and Eden had begun to ascend amid the roseate clouds when this legend was formed. The terrestrial chariot and horses are present, but a whirlwind is needed to carry them with the prophet to heaven. The narrative seems meant to admit of either theory—a heavenly or an earthly paradise. There Elias remained as a kind of Æolus, literally as on earth a weather-prophet; and to this day in Greece, and many parts of the East, when a severe storm with lightning arises, the peasants say, "Elias goes forth in his chariot!"*

* When the abyss between biblical and other mythology has ceased to be so convenient, perhaps there may be traced some connection between the ravens that fed Elias and those birds of Odin that circle around Raven's Hill where Barbarossa sleeps; and also between Elias and our folk-tales of Æolus.

In folk-lore Elias unites in himself characteristics both of the Sleepers and Wanderers. In some regions he is supposed to have employed his leisure in paradise with writing a book. In Moslem legend he is a Wanderer. A powerful sheikh, they say, wished to utilise the miraculous gifts of Elias, and had him chained. The tyrant led him over his lands because his "footsteps were blessed," but at the prophet's every step the fields withered. The sheikh was about to slay Elias, when the prophet asked permission to quench his thirst at what is now called the "sealed fountain," near Bethlehem. The tyrant held the chain which, however, elongated itself: the bonds fell off, the rock closed behind him, and since then Elias "has continued to travel over the whole world, rendering every place verdant on which he treads." The "sealed fountain" of the rains, which only Elias could unseal in the time of drouth, would appear in this myth to feel its relation with the Sun. One need not wonder that Dr. Schliemann found a Greek church consecrated to Elias on the site of a temple of Helios.*

* It would be an interesting question, but one that cannot be discussed here, to consider how far the idea of eternal Wanderers may have been primarily connected with the ever-returning heavenly bodies. Ewald and Goldziher agree that the years of Enoch's visible life, 365, indicate the solar year. Ewald thinks he was probably a god of the New Year.

The Dualism which in the Semitic Mythology divided the undying ones into good and evil, is generally found in the corresponding traditions of other regions. We find good and evil counterparts in Barbarossa and Wodan; in the Wild Huntsman, and faithful Eckhardt who warns of his approach; in King Arthur wandering as a raven, contrasted with Merlin, bound for ever in his prison of air by the spell of Vivien; in the German Monk Felix (who, like Abbot Cormac, listened for centuries to the singing bird, W. Grimm, *Altdeutsche Walder*, ii. 70), with King Herla, who was similarly bewitched by the evil dwarf to whose wedding he went; in Siegfried, with Van der Decken, who swore his ship should round the Cape, "despite God or Devil, if it took till judgment," and is now the Flying Dutchman; in Tannhäuser, with Lohengrin; in Ogier among the fairies of Morgana, with the Gros Veneur; in the Seven Sleepers of Tours, with Hugo wandering beside their grotto.

IV.

THE LEGENDS GENERALISED.

If we examine well the account in the Zendavesta of the paradise wherein Yima walked with Ahuramazda, and that in Genesis of Eden where Enoch walked with Elohim, we can hardly fail to recognise in them the germ of the Messianic dream. The visions of the renovated earth described by Philo, and in the Sibylline Oracles, and in the Apocalypse of Baruch, are but realistic expansions of those happy retreats of the holy ones who were not supposed to taste corruption.* In this idealised earth were gathered the beauties and joys of many Gulistans.

And, similarly, he who was to reign over the imparadised in this perfected earth was to be an im-

* See Professor Drummond's "The Jewish Messiah," etc. In Haug's *Essays* will be found a full account of Yima and his earthly paradise.

mortal king returning from his Avalon, invested with the attributes of all the incorruptible. These had been gradually raised into an abstract personality—the "Angel-Messiah," to which Mr. Ernest de Bunsen has given such patient research with many interesting results—who, however, was purely a terrestrial being, a Son of Man.

The phrase "Ancient of Days," used three times in Daniel vii., and the snow-white hair there ascribed to that being, who gives dominion to the Son of Man brought before him, convey the idea of a being that has lived through all changes, a memory and consciousness in which the ages broken up to mortal eyes are knit together, and therefore able to be a providence and a retributive judge. Viceroy of this Ancient of Days is the immortal man in whose unbroken consciousness all history is embodied: he is the earthly providence. Before Abraham was, he is. He abides with the Ancient in his earthly dwelling, but goes forth at appointed periods for certain purposes. He is the "Son of Man" as distinguished from the sons of Kings; reigns not by succession but by election of the Deity manifested in signs and marvels, such as the carrier dove bringing the divine sanction to emperors who break the order of legitimacy. No incarnation was imagined; the avatars of this Son of Man are the

V.

TRANSFIGURATION.

THOUGH the alleged longevity of the Jewish patriarchs temporarily made up for the absence of the conception of immortality, this idea arrived. The representatives of Seth live above an average of nine centuries each, with one remarkable exception: Enoch, the best of them, lives less than half the years of the least. Whatever may have been the original reason for this exception, the explanation was that Enoch really outstripped even the 969 years of Methuselah, having never died at all. In paradise he would have access to the Tree of Life. In the farther development of Israel other "beginners"—as Moses representing Law, and Elias Prophecy—might eclipse Enoch, and wear "by authority" his mantle of immortality; but in popular faith and folk-lore Enoch held his own. He was said to have invented writing, arithmetic, and astronomy;

to have filled 300 volumes with the knowledge acquired by long residence among the angels; his first being a book predicting the Deluge, which was preserved by Noah in the Ark. In many respects Enoch resembles Teiresias, to whom Zeus granted a life on earth of seven or nine generations, and who even in Hades was said by Homer to have retained his human perception, while those around him were mere shades (Plato, Meno, 100).* His fame as a soothsayer, both on earth and in Hades, grew out of the belief in his long experience, and no doubt this was the case with Enoch also. Most folk-sayings and predictions were connected with Enoch as forged runes and verses are now attributed to Mother Shipton. (It will be remembered that the first English book on this theme was entitled *The Wandering Jew telling fortunes to Englishmen*, 1640.) It might have been supposed that Enoch would be present at the Transfiguration of Jesus. Paul had spoken of him with honour; Jude quoted from him; and it is probable that he was meant as one of the "two witnesses" alluded

* The blindness ascribed to Teiresias presents a curious coincidence with that attributed to Lamech in Legendary Art, which leads to his accidentally killing Cain with an arrow. In both cases the significance probably is that of one who is blind to immediate consequences while seeing or carrying out the decrees of Fate.

body, even to its wounds, but at the same time so transformed that it was with difficulty recognised, and was mistaken for a spirit. In the *Gospel according to the Hebrews* (Nicholson, p. 68) it is written, after the story of James living without food until he saw Jesus risen from the dead, that "when he (Jesus) came to those about Peter, he said to them, 'Take, feel me, and see that I am not a bodiless dæmon.'" Ignatius, who preserved this, says (*Ep. ad Smyrnæos*, c. iii.), "I both know that he was in the flesh after the resurrection and believe that he is [in it]. . . . And straightway they touched him and believed, being constrained by his flesh and spirit. Because of this they thought lightly even of death, and were found superior to death. And after the resurrection he ate and drank with them as one in the flesh though spiritually united to the Father."

The main difficulty about earthly immortality, presented in the shrivelled form of Tithonus, solved in Enoch's case by transfiguration, was settled in later mythologies by the theory of a fountain of Perpetual Youth. When Ponce de Leon heard of the New World he hastened thither to find this Fountain: in the depths of luxuriant Florida he searched, and never reappeared.

VI.

MANTLES OF THE IMMORTALS.

WE have already seen that in the Gospel of Nicodemus (xxv.), Enoch and Elias are represented as welcoming those who arrive in Paradise. In an Arabian legend Grässe finds an important form of this tradition. It is said that Enoch and Elias came to the Land of Darkness, and there drank of the fountain of Perpetual Youth; and thenceforth, one on land, the other on sea, they went about to watch over pilgrims, much the same as Castor and Pollux, who guarded wanderers. In the intervals of such services they rest in gardens amid all earthly joys. Towards the end of the world they will appear to prepare the way for the Messiah. But in the sixteenth year of the Hegira, Elias had not yet found the Fountain. When the Arabians had conquered a certain city they rested between two mountains of Syria. At night when Fadilah, their commander,

began to pray, "Allah Akbar," a voice pronounced the words and continued to the end of the prayer. Fadilah at first thought it an echo, but presently knew it could not be such, and appealed to him who had spoken, if man and not a ghost, to appear. Then an aged man with a staff appeared, and said, "I am here by command of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has left me in this world until his second coming. Therefore I await this Lord who is the source of all happiness." He gave his name as Zerib Ben Bar Elia. Fadilah having asked if the end of the world were near or far, Elia answered, "When there shall be no difference in sex between men and women; when the blood of innocents shall be shed; when abundance of food shall not lessen its price; when the poor beg alms without finding anything to live on; when love to man shall be lost; when the Holy Scriptures shall be put into songs; when temples dedicated to the true God are filled with idols—then be sure that the Day of Judgment is near!" Whereupon the old man disappeared.*

Occasionally the cant of persons pretending to be the Wandering Jew has faintly echoed this Eastern specimen. As for the "two witnesses," it may be remembered that we have already noticed (I.) efforts

* Herbelot: *Bibl. Orient.* iii. p. 607 (ref. by Grässe).

made in the seventeenth century to prove that two survivors from the time of the Crucifixion existed. This could be done by regarding Cartaphilus ('the famous Joseph') and Ahasuerus as different persons. Or it may have been that Joseph and Malchus were thought of, especially in Italy, where these seem to have been the corresponding figures.

Jewish superstitions of this character were reinforced from another direction. The Greeks had their legend of the long sleep of Epimenides on the Isle of Knossus. Epimenides being one of the Seven Sages, there might easily grow from his legend that of the Seven Sleepers.

The familiar form of this legend is that given by Gibbon (xxxiii), who follows Gregory of Tours, as an incident of the Decian persecution. It is also in the Koran (xviii.). Goethe follows the Koran mainly in his poem on the subject, but assigns the legend to a pre-Christian period, no doubt on good grounds. According to this version the Sleepers were youths of Cæsar's household who refused to worship that emperor when he proclaimed himself a god; saying they would worship him alone who had created the sun, moon, and stars. Thereupon they departed, but Cæsar pursued them; and when they had taken refuge in a cavern near Ephesus, the emperor walled up the en-

trance, so that they could not escape. After the lapse of some centuries the wall gave way, and one of them entered Ephesus to buy bread. He offered an ancient coin; was suspected of having found treasure; but by telling of various things hidden about the city, unknown before, the story of the miraculous slumber was confirmed. When the king and others went out to visit the youths, the Angel Gabriel appeared, closed the cavern, and led the Seven into Paradise. According to the version which Goethe used, one of the Seven was a faithful dog which had accompanied the six young men, and passed into paradise with them.*

The tale of the Wanderings of Odysseus would appear to have touched the Spanish variant of the Seven Sleepers myth, which probably influenced the mind of Columbus. According to this story, Seven Bishops, flying from persecution, sailed westward and reached a beautiful island where they built seven splendid cities. This was dreamed of as the 'Island of the Seven Cities' (Baring-Gould, *Curious Myths*, ii. 277). A legend told by Washington Irving

* A curious instance of the supremacy of the artist over the man, when Goethe's horror of dogs is remembered. Goethe threw up his connection with Weimar Theatre because Carl August insisted on admitting, to 'perform' on the stage, the animal which this poem introduces into Paradise.

relates that Don Fernando was wafted to this island, where he dwelt in great happiness, until he one day sank into unconsciousness. When he awakened from this Circe spell, he found himself on his ship near the Iberian coast. He repaired to the house of a lady to whom he was affianced ; she disclaimed all knowledge of him ; and when he addressed her by name it appeared that he was thinking of her great-grandmother, whom she closely resembled.*

These mingled Greek and Jewish traditions came into Christendom mainly through the words Jesus is reported to have said concerning John, " If I will that he tarry till I come." It was on St. John that the mantle of the undying saints first fell in the Christian period. The place of his slumber was located beside that of the Seven Sleepers, at Ephesus. The story stands well-framed in the fossil English of the fourteenth century traveller, Sir John Maundeville.

" From Pathmos men gon unto Ephesim, a fair citie, and nyghe to the see. And there dyede Seynte Johne and was buryed behynde the highe Awtiere, in a Toumbe. And there is a fair Chirche. For Christene

† This legend may, in turn, have helped to create the figure of Don Juan, the unsaintly Wanderer whose story is possibly related to the mythology we are considering. There are interesting suggestions in Le Sage's *Diable Boiteux*, but the figure of Don Juan awaits further study.

Mere weren wont to holden that place alweyes. And in the Tombe of Seynt John is noughte but Manna, that is clept Angeles Mete. For his Body was translated in to Paradys. And Turkes holden now alle that Place and the citee and the Chirche. And all Asie the lesse is y cleped Turkye. And zee shulle undrestonde, that Seynt Johne leet make his Grave there in his Lyfe, and leyd him self there inne alle quyk. And therefore somme Men seyn, that he dyed noughte, but that he restethe there till ten Day of Doom. And forsothe there is a gret Marveyle: For Men may see there the Erthe of the Tombe apertly many tymes steren and meven, as there weren quykke thinges undre."

The legends concerning Saint John given by St. Hippolyte, followed by Eusebius, and Augustine, and the ordeals he survived—such as drinking hemlock—were suggestive of the potency of the words spoken by Christ, however casually, "Tarry till I come." The same formula spoken to the Wandering Jew made him as indestructible as the disciple "whom Jesus loved." Despite the ingenuity of the theory, one can hardly doubt that M. Schoebel is right in supposing that the Wanderer's early name, Cartaphilus, is formed of the Greek *κάρτα φίλος*, signifying "the Beloved."

VII.

THE MARK OF CAIN.

IN the Oberammergau Passion Play, where scenes from the New Testament are preceded by tableaux from the Old, Cain killing Abel is made to foreshadow Judas betraying Jesus. In some Eastern lands Cain has always been regarded as a Wanderer still living; and to this day the Bedouin recognises his presence in the hot Khamseen (Cain-wind), as in the destructive hurricane the Picardy peasant exclaims, "*C'est le Juif errant qui passe.*" For a long time, indeed, Cain was supposed to be the Wandering Jew, and possibly this belief was thought of by Shakspeare (*King Richard II.*, v. 6) in the words of Bolingbroke to Exton:

> "With Cain go wander through the shade of night,
> And never show thy head by day nor light."

In *Tabari* (i. 30), Adam says:

> "We one have had in the midst of us whom death hath not yet found.
> No peace for him, no rest for him, treading the blood-drenched ground.'

The so-called 'mark' of Cain was conceived to be a physical sign, and this appears in the legend of the Wandering Jew: he was said to have the mark of a blood-red cross on his forehead. Xeniola says the Inquisition sought to secure him by this sign, but the Wanderer concealed it under a black bandage.

In Rabbinical superstition Cain was not the son of Adam but of Sammaël, the later demon derived from wandering Esau. He (Cain) was banished to the Wilderness of Dendain, where his companions are Behemoth and Leviathan, who harm him not, though they are ever fattened by devouring wicked mortals in order that they may supply food for the righteous amid the desolations preceding the last day.

As Cain wandered in a wilderness to the east of Eden, in distinction from Seth, who dwelt in a fair region of the west, so while St. John was bodily alive in his paradise, Judas "went to his own place." As Cain was son of Sammaël, Satan "entered into" Judas.

The obvious evil counterpart of John was Judas. The two had sat nearest Jesus at the Last Supper, and had come in contact with his immortalising flesh—one by leaning on his breast, the other by a treacherous kiss. A more potent security against death lay in the immediate way in which Jesus gave to both the bread and wine, of which he said, "he that eateth my flesh and

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

However this may be, even the circumstantial account in the New Testament of his death could not save Judas from becoming one of the evil wanderers.

But this fate of Judas was postponed because of circumstances which brought a more important agent of Antichrist to the front. While Rome was yet pagan, and the Christians suffering there, the Man of Sin confronting the Son of Man would naturally be visible there. The mark of Cain is seen as the mark of the Beast, and the forehead of the Beast was Nero. It so happened that among the Romans themselves there prevailed, for some time after his death, a belief that Nero had not really died. The fears of some, the pride of others, forbade them to believe that this powerful representative of the throne of the Cæsars was no more, and they looked for his return to give battle to the rising kingdom of the Nazarene.*

But when Rome had been converted to Christianity, it became necessary to transfer the *rôle* of Antichrist to some race which still refused to surrender to the new kingdom.

* This legend has been discussed by Mr. Call, in an essay already referred to (p. 30). From references kindly supplied by him, I incline to believe it of Eastern origin. It is mentioned by Tacitus (Hist. ii. 81), and by the Sibylline Oracles (iv.), at nearly the same period. Suetonius, Commodianus, Victorinus, and Sulpicias Severus, were familiar with the story that Nero was still alive. Neander, Merivale, and Canon Farrar, connect the legend with the formation of the theory of an Antichrist.

The one unconquerable race—outside Rome, where the poor Jews had found their need of an immediate revolution too strong for their sufferance and loyalty to old traditions—was the Jewish. This people could be tortured, driven from land to land under the curse of Cain, but not converted to Christianity. Then attention returned from Nero to Judas.

There was an ancient story about Cain, reproduced in the Koran, but no doubt following the much earlier rabbinical tradition before mentioned, that the Devil came to Eve in a dream, when she was pregnant with her first son, and persuaded her to call the child by a name which meant "servant of Satan." In the course of time a somewhat similar legend grew around the phantasmal Judas. It was said that the mother of Judas had a dream shortly before his birth, in which it was disclosed to her that her son would murder his father and sell his God. She and her husband thereupon resolved that the child should not live, and at his birth he was enclosed in a chest and cast into the sea. But the sea cast him on shore, and he was found by a king and queen, who adopted him. But they had another son, whom Judas slew during a quarrel over a game of chess. Thereupon he fled to Judea, and entered the service of Pilate as his page. Having committed other predestined crimes, including the murder of his

father, Judas learned from his mother the secret of his birth, and of the dream that preceded it. In terror and contrition, Judas hears of a prophet who has power to forgive sins; he seeks out Jesus, throws himself at his feet; and Jesus, recognising his predestined betrayer, accepts him as a disciple, and entrusts him with the purse, so that Judas's avarice might be cultivated and this peculiarly divine scheme should not fail. Judas was thus made a retrospective Wanderer.

In old Greek and Russian pictures, Judas is represented on the knees of Satan as his beloved son, beside the serpent which appears to be the dove in this infernal trinity; but this Christian fable about Judas would seem to show Satan indebted to Jesus for his beloved son's training in wickedness.

That, according to the New Testament, Judas had grief and remorse, and expiated his offence by death, might naturally have awakened some compassionate feeling for him, or sense of his humanity. But in the mediæval faith this grief and remorse were not in him, they were Furies sent to torment him. In the old Passion Plays Remorse is a real personage, who torments Judas until he invokes Despair, who lays before him poison, a dagger, and a rope to choose from. Nor was Christian logic equal to the consistency of Disraeli's contention that, according to the

faith, the betrayal and crucifixion, being essential to salvation, were compulsory on Judas and the Jews.

It will be remembered that the earliest recorded Wandering Jew, Cartaphilus, informed the Armenian Bishop that he had been Pilate's doorkeeper. By this item he is linked with the legendary Judas, who is said to have been a page in Pilate's palace. It may now be remarked that Pilate also was the subject of a somewhat similar legend. There are two classes of legends concerning him. In the Abyssinian Church Pilate became a martyr and a saint, his calendar day being June 25. But in the south of Europe the story ran that Pilate became a remorseful Wanderer. He committed suicide by drowning himself in a tarn on Mount Pilate, near Lucerne. It is a myth, as Professor Sayce has shown, evolved from the old name of the mountain—"Pileatus," meaning capped (either with foliage or cloud*). That little lake has lost all its

* *Introduction to the Science of Language*, vol. ii. p. 246. "It is remarkable," adds Professor Sayce, "that a French range of hills in the neighbourhood of Vienne bears the same name as the Swiss mountain, and from the same cause. Vienne, however was actually the place to which Pilate was banished; and the accidental coincidence is a striking example of the impossibility of our discovering historic truth in a myth, although we may know from other sources that it has accidentally attached itself to a real event. Close to Vienne is a ruin called the 'Tour de Mauconseil,' from which, it is said, Pilate threw

natural picturesqueness. It is called the "infernal lake." Now and then, in the dusk, a man is seen to emerge and wash his hands in it as in a basin; when he disappears a hurricane follows.

The curse of Cain came upon yet another name,—Malchus. This servant of Caiaphas, whose ear cut off by Peter was healed by Jesus, had no reason to be thankful, it would appear by the legend; this relates that he struck Christ with an iron gauntlet, and was doomed to walk around a column underground, against which he vainly dashes his head, until Judgment Day. We have already seen (I.) that the Wandering Jew, under the name of Joseph, was reported as undergoing a similar punishment in Jerusalem, in 1641. The story of Malchus seems to blend that of Ahasuerus with the Talmudic myth of Cain, which is related in Mr. Baring-Gould's *Curious Myths* (ii. p. 116). When Seth sought the Tree of Knowledge in order to plant a scion of it in the grave of Adam, (see VIII.), he saw its roots in Hell, and Cain trying to climb thereby into Paradise. The roots laced themselves around Cain and pierced him through and through, holding him bound in living agony for ever.

According to Christian and Jewish revelations Cain

himself in despair. But the value of the legend may be easily estimated when we learn that the tower is really a *tête-du-pont* built by Philippe de Valois."

Race-hatred had much to do with the shaping of this theology, which anathematised the race from whose primitive superstitions it was chiefly borrowed, without discrimination or comprehension.

The "anti-Semitic" venom crept for ages through the veins of Christendom. Fed by millions of pulpits the deadly stream percolated through the world, and a consistent theory concerning the Jews was formed, not very different from that which at length appeared in Swedenborg's pious phantasmagoria. In the history of Israel, says Mr. White, Swedenborg "sees nothing but selfish Jacob over and over again; and throughout the *Arcana Celestia* he pursues the Jews with one whip of epithets as the basest of mankind."* The Jewish race was "chosen" by God not because of their excellence, but for their baseness: their lack of interior religion made them fit actors in a drama where literalness was needed; their sensuality adapted them to be the instrument of incarnation; and Jesus was born of a Jewish mother because he could go no lower! "In that body, whose every faculty was an avenue to the Hells, he met as on a battle-field the Powers of Evil and Darkness and subdued them." A fine offset this to the late Lord Beaconsfield's proud

* *Emanuel Swedenborg; his Life and Writings.* By William White. (Simpkin, Marshall and Co., 1868.) P. 197, *sq.*

VIII.

THE JEW IN THEOLOGY.

THE fable concerning Judas is one of many which indicate the formation of a special Christian doctrine concerning the Jewish race.

After the ruin of their Temple at Jerusalem and desolation of their city, the Jews made repeated efforts —like that led by Bar-Cocheba—to recover their independence. As the possibility of recovering their city and rebuilding their Temple faded away they managed, even in their dispersed condition, to constitute an *imperium in imperio* under an officer called Resh Gelutha, or "Prince of the Captivity." As was natural, they never lost an opportunity of opposing the new empire, of which Jesus had been made General. In the fourth century they joined the Arians. When Julian was called the Apostate he gave them leave to rebuild their Temple at Jerusalem,

their hope of doing which was suddenly quenched by that Emperor's death. These great events, of which the most typical can alone be mentioned here, were steadily constituting a definite creed concerning the Jewish race, a creed afterwards to be written upon all Europe in their blood, and illustrated in the flames that consumed them.

The Christians believed that the Jews, as a race, gave themselves up to be the devil's agent for the crucifixion of Christ. Even the idea of converting them seems hardly to have occurred to any Christian before the Reformation—unless the Holy Cross Day torture at Rome be called such—and, justly as the Jews now resent the efforts of conversionists, the existence of a Society of that kind is a result of the tardy recognition of their humanity. The scenes of the Passion—so long preached, pictured, acted on the stage—cast upon the Jews a shadow never relieved, and were a perpetual instruction in horror of that people. The supernatural character ascribed to them by Christians as well as themselves, implied, since they had rejected Christ, infranatural wickedness. They were to Christendom the chosen people still, but now chosen of Satan.

While the sacred names and superstitions of the Jewish people were preserved, a deadly hatred of those

fixion, which denoted the unpardonable and everlasting nature of the offence against the eternal Avenger of his honour. It is only the God of Theology whose vengeance never sleeps nor ends with any generation, whose wrath is fresh every day, and his hell eternal. Only when man has had his human heart dexterously removed, and has become the changeling of some vampyre Phantasm he coweringly adores, could he be the instrument of the crimes that Christianity has committed against humanity.

Seven times shall Cain be avenged, seventy and seven times Lamech, ran the old song; but Jesus said, seventy times seven shalt thou forgive. The human Jesus was speedily overlaid and st beneath the myths that gathered around the pass. Jesus—the babe, the dead body. No holiday was appointed for the Sermon on the Mount, nor was there any Festival of the Golden Rule.

And so it came that, at the dawn of Protestantism, there was a popular belief that the prophet of Forgiveness had been vindictively pursuing one poor Jew throughout the world for fifteen centuries!

IX.

THE JEW IN FOLK-LORE.

It is related in the *Legenda Aurea* of John Capgrave that St. Brendain, on his famous voyage, came to an island filled with beautiful birds whose music entranced the souls of listeners. The birds told the saint that they had been angels; when the rebel angels plotted their designs in heaven they had been tempted by the Archfiend to join his party; they did not yield, but dallied with the temptation, and when the wicked beings were cast into the sea of fire, they were transformed into birds. They sang hymns of joy, awaiting their release.

On the other hand, the ill-omened "Seven Whistlers" or "Seven Plovers," of English superstition are said to have been Jews who assisted in the crucifixion of Jesus.

These birds are types of the fables that flitted about

the world in the Middle Ages, each the transformation and diminution of their like which had been set free by the decay of both European and Jewish mythology. Christianity had preserved both with care. The Jewish mythology it had disintegrated and recombined for its own supernatural authentication; to the European deities it had given a new lease of life by degrading them to devils, affirming their power to haunt and harm their former worshippers. If there had been any kindly attributes or pleasant tales associated with these deities they were transferred to the Christian saints; if any evils had been told of such, they were intensified under the sweeping anathema of the new religion.

Into this miasmatic atmosphere anti-Semitic prejudice and theology were diffused. The same process as that just mentioned concerning "paganism" presently overtook the Jews. When all hope of changing or exterminating it had passed away the theological theory was naturally formed by which all the good in the Jewish system was transferred to Christianity, and everything repulsive was diabolised. Unfortunately for the Jews their anathema came later than that which had degraded the deities and beliefs of pagan Europe; their sacred forms, rites, superstitions were the more vivid; so that the fading phan-

tions of European mythology were able to acquire new life by union with the fresher ones imported from the East. In this way the demons, gnomes, witches, which, from representing the majesty as well as the menace of nature, had been doomed to bear responsibility for all its cruelties, now came to nestle with the Jews. These were already the normal scapegoat for the fall of man and martyrdoms of Christians; now there entered into them a troop of imaginary horrors worse than any known to their most barbarous days. Of these a few characteristic examples may be selected from the very large number known to every student of folk-lore.

The periodical assemblies of witches believed to occur in various wild places were called "Witches' Sabbaths," because Jews were supposed to be the chief attendants at them. They there received their wages for supporting the kingdom of Antichrist. They celebrated a grand mass before the Devil. The blood of Christian children was said to be essential to their sacrifices. In some regions where, under the ancient religion, the effigy of winter had been burnt on one or another day of spring, it became the custom to burn it on Good Friday and under the name of Judas. The ceremony of scourging and burning Judas still takes place annually in the London Docks. In Spain it is con-

sidered necessary to spit after pronouncing the word "Jew;" and from that country the paganised effigies of that people have spread through distant regions of the world. In some regions (as Oldenberg) the birthday of poor everlasting Judas is said to be February 14, in others (as Franconia) it is fixed as April 1, and these days are unlucky. The stigma of Iscariot passed upon certain trees, as the aspen, which was said to tremble perpetually because he hung upon it; and the Judas-tree, with its blood-drop blossoms. In the Bergstrasse, or high road between Darmstadt and Heidelberg, the peasantry still believe that every Jew possesses the "evil eye," and that if a sick person wishes to die swiftly he must get a Rabbi to pray for his convalescence. In sundry places Jews are believed able to foretell the weather by means of dividing a loaf of bread, putting the parts together again, and shoving it with a mysterious word into an oven. They are also believed to spread diseases by spells written in Hebrew on bits of paper, and to deal in such charms. In some regions noises heard in mines were indifferently attributed to kobolds, or to the ghosts of Jews believed to have been made to work in them as slaves by the Romans. In East Friesland it is considered very unlucky to meet a Jew first in the morning; if a Jew is the first to enter

one's house on Monday, or even to look into the window, it renders the whole week unlucky to the house, and was once an offence that might be prosecuted.* Other Jews impaled in the ever-repeated Christian legend took on, in the popular imagination, the diabolical forms into which the pagan deities had been degraded by missionaries. In storms Herod was said still to hunt the Innocents. The Perigord peasant names the fierce thunderstorm "la chasse Herode." This was probably an ingenious development of the Herr-Rote, or Haar-Rote, the red-haired demon-huntsman. Associated with him was Herodias. Grimm says that the Italians sometimes identify their misshapen fairy Befana—a terror to children, who has sprung out of Epiphania—as Herod's daughter (Salome); so that both mother and daughter were made into evil wanderers.† Herodias, who prompted her daughter to demand the head of John the Baptist, was associated with Diana and Holda in the nocturnal expeditions of demons and witches. She was at the head of an aerial host of such. Only from midnight to cockcrow can she rest, and then sits upon oaks and hazel-trees. She was said to have an unrequited passion for John,

* *Der deutsche Volksaberglaube der Gegenwart.* Dr. Adolf Wuttke. Berlin, 1869.

† *Deutsche Mythologie*, xiii. 5, 6. (Tr. by J. S. Stallybrass. Sonnenschein and Allen, 1880.)

and when his head was brought in on a charger would have kissed it, but it recoiled and blew upon her, and she was whirled into the air, where she wanders. In Lower Saxony whirlwinds are accounted for by the dancing of Herodias, as elsewhere to that of the devil. Herod and Herodias are said by Josephus to have been banished to Lyons, and eventually to have died in Spain; perhaps this may account for the special prominence she holds in the folk-lore of Spanish America. In Mexico the puppet Herodias dances in a kind of Punch and Judy show in Holy Week, to the music of rattles made of "Judas bones." In Eugene Sue's *Wandering Jew* Herodias appears in Arctic America. M. Gaston Paris cites several Italian proverbs in which Judas and Malchus are united (as in Sicily, *lu Juda-Marcu*) to characterise an ugly or unpleasant countenance. It has been thought (though I have not investigated the matter) that our puppet-show, *Punch and Judy*, is a distant outcome of an old play, *Pontius cum Judæis*, in which the Jews were severely handled by the pro-consul.

X.

THE WEIRD OF THE WANDERER.

THERE is one class of survivals from the fatalistic ideas of all so-called paganisms which have always been very strong in the popular mind of Europe. It was a creed in which all ancient faiths converged, that an irresistible power was lodged in any officially-uttered curse. The word once solemnly spoken, became the weird, the fatum, and not even the tongue that spake could revoke it. Oftenest the dooms that represented this belief in the Middle Ages were supposed to come from Heaven in response to some defiant invocation, or blasphemous challenge like that of the Flying Dutchman. It is a notable fact for the antiquarian that in the year 1881 the courts of England should be trying a case involving the question of whether a lecturer took out his watch and gave the deity, whose existence he denied, five minutes to strike

him dead. That is an old myth normally fixed on misbelievers; and it is probable that the motives for selecting that particular slander for judicial denial, if traced out, would be found connected with the ancient superstition that such words must have the eternal effect of real natural forces. From the ancient patriarchalism, which has so many political and social survivals in Europe, came the idea that a father's curse (or blessing) carried with it the fatal forces of the universe. More universal still was the potency supposed to attend the word of a priest, however casual. This notion is still met with in the many stories of persons said to have died soon after ridiculing the proceedings of "revivalists."

Grässe has collected some examples of such superstitions in Europe, beginning so far back as the legend of Domitilla, the grand-daughter of Domitian. In her room, after she had become a Christian, her husband introduced dancers to win her back to the world and to himself: he began showing them how to dance, but could not stop; and after dancing two days and nights, died. Such "dances" are now familiar in folk-lore, and are associated with some of the stone circles of England. In Kolbeck, near Halbustadt, there is a legend that, in the year 1012, a peasant named Albrecht and fifteen others who danced before

the Church on Christmas while Mass was going on, were ordered by the priest to dance for a year. The Bishop of Cologne had to come and release these dancers, who had worn a deep hole in the ground. In the same vein is the story of "the merry smith of Jüterbogk," a small survival of Sisyphus. A remarkable story of this kind is that of Freiburg (A. Müller, *Theatr. Freiburg Chron.*, 1633). An irritable father, Lorent Richter, ordered his son of fourteen years to do something: the boy hesitated, standing in the middle of the room. "Cursed boy," cried the father, "may you stand there for ever!" The boy remained standing there, propped by supports, and after many years the priests, by many prayers, could only secure the small commutation of a removal to a corner where he would not be so much in the way of the household. "At last the kind God a little altered the punishment by allowing him to sit during the last six months of the year, and also to lie in a bed placed near him. When asked what he did, he answered that he was punished by God the Lord for his sins; that he left all to His will; and trusted in the merits of Christ to obtain final happiness." After seven years—a number associated with many famous sleepers—the boy "was relieved, 11th Sept., 1552." His footprints were pointed out on the floor for a hundred years. The

father had wished to obliterate this memento of his anger, but the authorities decided that the footprints should remain as a warning to wrathful parents and disobedient children.

The great majority of "dooms" known to Northern paganism have exchanged connotations with the legend of the Wandering Jew. The sentence pronounced upon such royal huntsmen or robber-knights as Dyterbjernat of Danzig, Diedrick of Bern, Duke Abel the fratricide (Schleswig), and others, is usually of this character. In the Netherlands it is the story of a son who refused to listen to his father's Christian advice, but called his dogs into the wood: the father cried, "Hunt, then, for ever!" and so he hunts on, and his voice, mingled with the baying of dogs, is heard in the woods about the Castle of Wynedal. In Thuringia, it is Hakelnberg who would not listen to the priest, who bade him "hunt until the last day." These formulas of the curse are related to that of the Jew legend: the primitive pagan legend is different, *e.g.* the hunt long known as the Horlething, on the banks of the Wye. It was said King Herla went to the marriage feast of a dwarf: when he returned to his palace he found that he had been in the mountain with the dwarf two hundred years, and was under a doom to ride on until the day of judgment. The

visit to the dwarf's festival simply meant a relapse into paganism.

That the myth of the Wandering Jew was interwoven with that of the Demon Huntsman of Germany (which is called Aaskarreya in Norway), there can be no doubt. "Perhaps," says Karl Blind, "one of the clearest proofs of the phantom figure of the Wandering Jew having been grafted upon that of the great Wanderer and World-hunter, Wodan, is to be found in a tale of the Hartz Mountains. There it is said that the Wild Huntsman careers 'over the seven mountain-towns every seven years.' The reason given for his ceaseless wanderings is, that 'he would not allow our Lord Jesus Christ to quench his thirst at a river, nor at a water-trough for cattle, from both of which he drove him away, telling him that he ought to drink from a horse-pond.' For this reason the Wild Huntsman must wander about for ever, and feed upon horseflesh. And whoever calls out after him, when his ghostly chase comes by, will see the Wild Huntsman turn round, and be compelled by him to eat horseflesh too. No allusion whatever is made in this tale to a Jew, though the name of Christ is pressed into it in a way very like the Ahasuerus legend. We seem to get here a mythic rendering of the struggle between the old Germanic faith and the Christian

the Jewish race, that this Joseph of Arimathea, by giving a baptismal name to Cartaphilus, gave the English populace their epithet for the beggars or impostors who were supposed to be the Wandering Jew. He was called "Poor Joe!" Of him, as representing the dregs of the myth, more must be said hereafter. Another example of this degradation is shown in the fact that in various parts of Europe the storm-demon is called *Maccabee.* The process by which this was brought about has not, to my knowledge, been traced, but the following facts seem to bear on it.

In 2 Maccabæus, v. 2-4, it is written—"Then it happened that through all the city, for the space almost of forty days, there were seen horsemen running in the air, in cloth of gold, and armed with lances like a band of soldiers . . . Wherefore every man prayed that that apparition might turn to good." These apparitions, resembling those said by Josephus to have reappeared at the siege of Jerusalem, were adopted as good Christian omens. Judas Maccabæus also records his vision of the prophet Jeremiah giving him a golden sword to defend the holy people. It is probable that this was the germ of the superstition which proved so fatal to the Christians at the siege of Constantinople (1453). After the capture of the city, men, women and children rushed into the Church of St. Sophia for

protection, because of a prophecy that "one day the Turks would enter Constantinople and pursue the Romans as far as the column of Constantine in the square before St. Sophia; but that this would be the term of their calamities; that an angel would descend from heaven with a sword in his hand, and would deliver the empire, with that celestial weapon, to a poor man seated at the foot of the column. 'Take this sword,' would he say, 'and avenge the people of the Lord.' At these animating words the Turks would instantly fly . . . While they expected the descent of the tardy angel, the doors were broken with axes; and, as the Turks encountered no resistance, their bloodless hands were employed in selecting and securing the multitude of their prisoners" (Gibbon, ch. lxviii.).

It looks as if the association of the wild aerial chase with *Maccabee*, in France and other southern regions, might have resulted from the diffusion of the superstition which drew such a thunderbolt upon the Christians of Constantinople, and its gradual subjection to the demonising doom which rested upon even the brightest figures of Jewish history not wearing the Christian uniform.

XI.

"THE VERY DEVIL INCARNATION."

"ENTER Launcelot Gobbo!" So begins Scene ii. of Act II. in the *Merchant of Venice.* Or as the original stage-direction ran, "Enter the Clown!" His very name suggests the glutton and knave, yet it seems to be from him some Shakspearian guides derive their chief light on the great poet's picture of Shylock!

Gobbo does indeed cast light upon the Jew, but it comes from the mob which he represented. To say "my master is a very Jew," and "the Jew . . is the devil himself," are equivalent phrases in the capacious mouth of Gobbo. He speaks for his gaping herd, and their breed is not unknown. Judenhetze is able to turn out such men in the latter days of the nineteenth century.

Bochart, in his *Hierozoicon* (seventeenth century), says there was a Sea-monster called "The Old Jew;" with the white-bearded face of a man he had the hairy body

of an ox, otherwise calf-shaped. This monster always appeared the night before Saturday on the surface of the sea, and one could see him until sunset next day leaping and diving like a frog, and following ships. This monster, no doubt a variety of Al-Sâmeri, elsewhere considered, is a fair type of what every Jew was, for many centuries, in the eyes of the multitudinous Gobbites. What stood for religion in them was the vulgar ribaldry of the Miracle Plays, under which those holy farces presently perished. In them Judas, still the buffeted Wanderer, was the one figure-head of the Jewish race, with the devil for his familiar.

In ancient Persian pictures Ahriman and his host have flame for hair. After the introduction of Christianity the deities of Europe, which it degraded to devils, were described and painted with fiery hair and beard; as it stands in the German saying, "Roter Bart, Teufelsart." In the early Miracle Plays Judas was made up with red hair and beard to show the fiery abode to which he belonged. This feature survived also in the "yellow bonnet" which the Jews were compelled to wear, which replaced the scarlet or red bonnets which the "Scarlet Woman" found too like her own.* The significant costume, and the ideas

* See Knight's *Shakspeare*, notes to the *Merchant of Venice*.—Blanco White, in his *Letters from Spain* (1806), speaking of the Passion-Week shows, says: "The dress of the Apostle John

it expressed, passed to the conventional stage-Jew. Barabas, in Marlowe's *Jew of Malta*, and after him, Shylock, were represented with the "orange-tawny bonnet," and fiery red hair and beard.

In keeping with this the crimes popularly ascribed to the Jews, for which they suffered so terribly, were not human crimes. They were utterly without motive —such as no man, however vile, could have committed. For one example out of many, the Jews of Lincoln were charged with having fattened a Christian child of eight years on white bread and milk, then scourged him, crowned him with thorns, crucified him, giving him gall. For that impossible crime 112 eminent Jews were tortured and slain. It was rumoured that the earth would not receive the body of that child, yet for years Christian pilgrims visited its grave.

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is green, that of Judas yellow; and so intimately associated is this circumstance with the idea of the traitor, that it has brought that colour into universal discredit . . . . The Inquisition has adopted it for the *Sambenito*, a coat of infamy, which persons convicted of heresy are compelled to wear. The red hair of Judas, like Peter's baldness, seems to be agreed upon by all the painters and sculptors of Europe. *Judas' hair* is a usual name in Spain; and a similar appellation, it should seem, was used in England in Shakspeare's time. "His hair" says Rosalind, "is of the dissembling colour." To which Celia answers "Something browner than Judas's."

Such wild, popular notions were faithfully reflected in Marlowe's *Jew of Malta.* "Barabas," says Charles Lamb, "is a mere monster, brought in with a large painted nose, to please the rabble. He kills in sport —poisons whole nunneries—invents infernal machines. He is just such an exhibition as, a century or two earlier, might have been played before the Londoners, *by the Royal command*, when a general pillage and massacre of the Hebrews had been previously resolved on in the cabinet."

It will be now apparent to those who have followed the travels of this Jew-myth that it had carried about in its endless wanderings the belief in which it originated, and of whose development it was a type—the infranatural, finally the infernal, nature of the Jewish race. It inevitably blended with all the superstitions about uncanny phantoms, bringing the most evil and ominous shapes haunting the popular imagination in every locality into connection with the detested race. Demons from the air, goblins from their caves, birds of ill-omen, fearful gales, betokening the proximity of the Wandering Phantom, brought an ever-accumulating mass of fear, suspicion and hatred upon the race of which its supposed doom was a too faithful emblem. This vast cesspool of vulgar superstition mirrored the dogmas of a theology ever

developing downward. It was not permitted the masses to look upon the alleged offences of Judas or Ahasuerus in comparison with offences familiar to them. As we have seen, the offence thought of was the wrong and insult done to a God; it was an intensification of the same feeling that regarded theft from a church as worse than theft from the poorest widow, or a slight untruth under oath as more wicked than the most malicious lie not sworn to. Out of such a principle of unreason naturally came the doom of a race through many centuries to realise every ingenuity of torture fabled in the Greek Hades, with Gehenna added. Every revolving century was their Ixion-wheel, and every stream their Phlegethon.

XII.

THE WANDERING RACE.

PROFESSOR CHILD, of Harvard University, has remarked that, "in the second form of the legend, the punishment of perpetual existence, which gives rise to the old names, *Judæus non mortalis*, *Ewiger Jude*, is aggravated by a condemnation to perpetual change of place, which is indicated by a corresponding name, *Wandering Jew*, *Juif Errant*, etc." * In this change a great deal of history is represented. The Jewish race under persecution steadily became a wandering race. They were compelled to "move on" by the remorseless police of Christendom. One after another the laws of nations detached them from the soil, from the trade-guilds, from civic position, and they became a nation without a country.

This process went on for a long time before it was represented in any myth or legend. Mohammed

* *English and Scottish Ballads*, viii. 78.

said, "The Jews are the People of the Book." Joshua ben Siras ben Eliezer, a priest in Jerusalem two hundred years before the burning of the Second Temple (quoted by Heine), wrote, "All this is the Book of the Covenant made with the Most High God, namely, the Law which Moses commanded as a precious treasure to the House of Jacob. Wisdom floweth therefrom as the water of Pison when it is great, and as the water of Tigris when it overfloweth its banks in spring. Instruction floweth from it as the Euphrates when it is great, and as Jordan in the harvest. Correction cometh forth from it as the light, and as the water of the Nile in autumn. There is none that hath made an end of learning it, there is none that will ever find out all its mystery, for its wisdom is richer than any sea and its word deeper than any abyss."

So spake the genius of Israel, and, so speaking, itself uttered its first doom. A people to whom a book had become their Fatherland, which had come to see in it their Jordan, their Tigris, their Nile, had already given up their hold upon the territories of this world and become a wandering colony of Jahve, governed by a code unrelated to the vices or the aims of other races. This abstract country, whose geography was books and texts, was fenced around and

fortified as strongly as the territory of any nation. Its fortresses were ceremonies, customs, national traditions, and a perfect patience derived from faith in the God of their fathers. The Cain whom they abhorred was not more effectually "cursed from the earth," prohibited from tillage of the ground than this race which had taken Jahve for their portion and his law for their habitation.

In such a system there could be no compromise. And as a matter of fact there never was any compromise with the enemies of their faith. These people, who have shown ingenuity and cleverness of every kind, have never developed any sort of Jesuitism. I was astonished lately at learning of an instance in which a Jew outwitted his persecutors in true Christian style, for I never heard of another. This Jew was a pedlar, and he was wandering in France in the neighbourhood of one of those districts where the Virgin Mary is still continually opening new water-cure establishments. This Jew, having heard the latest miracle which had evoked a new fountain, smiled, and even made light of it. Thereon the innkeepers excited a mob, and they resolved to hang the *miscreant*—that is, the unbeliever—faggots being old-fashioned. They seized the poor pedlar and bore him off pallid with terror. As they passed near the new fountain, the

Jew begged permission to moisten his lips thereat; this was conceded, but no sooner had the water touched his lips than he leaped about with joy, and declared that the fountain had healed a severe rheumatism which he had suffered from for many years. "A miracle! a miracle!" shouted the crowd; the Jew suddenly became a hero, and was carried before the priest, who appointed the next day to baptize him before all the people and make a grand demonstration. The Jew, however, disappeared during the night.

This story, which I found in a recent number of the *Jewish World*, is a modern appendage to the old legend mentioned by Mr. Baring-Gould, that the gipsies were said to wander under a doom pronounced on them because they refused to shelter the Virgin and child in the flight into Egypt. But this witty pedlar is not a fair representative of the race. "Sufferance is the badge of all our tribe," said Shylock. Though Shylock has been regarded by many as a type of avarice and extortion, yet even he cannot be tempted by money when his struggle with the Merchant becomes a religious issue. Shakspeare rightly shows Shylock unyielding; many times the money due to him cannot bribe him from the blow he feels empowered to strike for his despised Israel. And

when, in the beginning of this century, Nathan Rothschild started as the great banker of London, no temptations could induce him, shrewd as he was, to lend money or enter into any contracts for the benefit of Spain or its colonies. The Israelite was never lost in the banker, and showed his supremacy when it came to a race which had banished his own from the Iberian Peninsula; though at the same time his charities and those of his house have included Christians hardly less than Jews. The same unyielding religious spirit was shown when thirty-three years ago Baron Lionel de Rothschild was elected Member of Parliament for the City of London. The honour of being the first Jew in that body could not induce him to swear his allegiance "on the true faith of a Christian," and on the New Testament. He remained out of his seat for eleven years—and with him David Salomons, who paid the penalty of £500 for voting in the House without being duly sworn—when Parliament yielded to men who did not yield, and the oath was changed for Jews.

It has sometimes excited wonder why this wanderer among the races, uncompromising amid the hatred of ages, was not exterminated. It must often have appeared to them that, like the bush in their own legend, they were burnt without being consumed,

because their God was in the bush. But no miraculous force need be sought in the case, nor any exceptional tenacity of life in them as a race; their circumstances developed in them special faculties adapted to the commerce and civilisation of the world. Heine said truly "the Jews were legally condemned to become rich." The populace generally believed that Jewish wealth was got from the Devil, their wages for maintaining the kingdom of Antichrist in the world. The Jewish banker, Samuel Bernard, who died in 1789, leaving a large property, had a black cock which was popularly believed to be connected with his wealth. The suspicion was confirmed when the bird died a day or two before its master.

As a matter of fact the Jews were driven to deal in money and jewellery—a word supposed by some to be derived from "Jew"—by the general exclusion of them from the possession of land and from the acquisition of property by handicraft. Gold and silver alone were left for their enterprise.

And there were good causes why they amassed wealth. The first was that they did not spend it on Gentile baubles. They cared not for the pomps and luxuries of a world to which they did not belong. Why then did they want to accumulate it? Why were they so thrifty and unwearied in their pursuit of

gold? To ascribe this to avarice is to accept a popular fallacy refuted by the history of that people, who are even lavish in their charities and in their support of public enterprises (as in England and America) where they are free and equal citizens. In their earlier days the Jews' hope of recovering their country and re-establishing their Theocracy under the Messiah was a passionate aspiration, it was as sincere as any patriotism; every Jew held his wealth and his life as a trust for that end. All their wealth they hoped one day to lay at the Messiah's feet. So it began, and then a new factor re-enforced it. The wealth of the Jews became the main means of their survival as a people. Kings and Popes protected them for the money they could get out of them. But for this they would certainly have been exterminated. From them chiefly was extorted the money for Henry the Second's Crusade in their own Holy Land. Mainly by their labour and wealth Westminster Abbey was built. By such protective extortions there was established a certain force of natural selection and evolution, based on their wealth, which gradually made them the financial princes of Europe and bankers of the world.

Whatever German bigots may say, the financial supremacy of the Jews has been well and wisely exer-

cised. The nations not included under it have fared according to their folly. When Queen Isabella of old wished to protect the Jews because of such advantages, she was confronted by the fanatic who said, "Judas sold his Lord for thirty pieces of silver; will you sell Him for thirty millions?" So the Jews suffered in Spain; but what did Spain suffer? What did Holland and England gain by the Spanish Jews, first tolerated, then welcomed in their cities? This Germany will be able to answer if the jealous bigots there let loose on the Jews should succeed in driving them out of the country.

"Thou, O Daniel, shut up the words and seal the book, even to the time of the end: many shall run to and fro, and knowledge shall be increased." So early did the compulsory tendencies of the Jews reveal themselves. Their alienation among other peoples made them close up in their ceremonial law as in a shell; their book was sealed amid inferior 'revelations' swarming around them, and themselves sealed in it: but, meanwhile, detached from the soil and the guilds of every country, forced to be exchangers, pedlars, they must travel to and fro, and their knowledge was increased. They became so well acquainted with the lore of different lands, with the medical and other knowledge of various countries, that they were sup-

posed to possess occult powers. Occasionally, this reputation might be of service to them, as in the instance where Queen Elizabeth employed a Jewish physician for his supposed occult knowledge; but more often it harmed them, as in the evil fate that overtook that same physician, whom jealous rivals accused of an attempt to poison the Queen. For many centuries they presented the most remarkable instance of a people who had largely outgrown their primitive superstitions, and acquired a religious and intellectual enlightenment beyond the rest of the world, who yet kept all this culture within the hard walls of their barbaric stronghold, their ancient forms and formulas, from which they did not dare to venture.

XIII.

THE POUND OF FLESH.

PASSING out of Rome by the Via Appia, one comes to many places of antiquarian interest, but presently arrives at a spot whose significance increases with time. This is the church called *Domine quo vadis.* There, says the legend, St. Peter, once more flying from danger, met Jesus, and said, "Lord, whither goest thou?' Jesus answered, '*Venio Romam iterum crucifigi.*' Whereupon Peter returned, and met his fate—that hard one of a mythical martyrdom, followed by resurrection as a Pontifical Jupiter, wielding his keys as thunderbolts. A fac-simile of the holy footprints of Jesus is here in the church, the originals, sunk in marble, being preserved in Saint Sebastian's Church.

Goethe had perhaps seen the worshippers around these footprints (near by the Jewish catacomb with its seven-branch candlestick), when there arose in him

the idea of a poem which, alas, never got farther than the outline given in a further chapter. Writing from Terni, October 27th, 1786, he says: "Yesterday I felt inspired to undertake a work which at present would be ill-timed. Approaching nearer and nearer to the centre of Romanism, surrounded by Roman Catholics, boxed up with a priest in a sedan, and striving anxiously to observe and to study without prejudice true nature and noble art, I have arrived at a vivid conviction that all traces of original Christianity are extinct here. Indeed, while I tried to bring it before my mind in its purity, as we see it recorded in the Acts of the Apostles, I could not help shuddering to think of the shapeless, not to say grotesque, mass of heathenism which heavily overlies its benign beginnings. Accordingly, the 'Wandering Jew' again occurred to me as having been a witness of all this wonderful development and envelopment, and as having lived to experience so strange a state of things, that Christ himself, when he shall come a second time to gather his harvest, will be in danger of being crucified a second time. The legend *Venio iterum crucifigi* was to serve me as the material of this catastrophe."*

Perhaps Goethe also witnessed "Holy-Cross Day"

* Morrison's translation (Bohn).

in Rome, when the Jews were "compelled to come in" and hear the annual sermon—"haled," as one said, "as it were by the head and hair, and against their obstinate hearts, to partake of the heavenly grace." Had the two visionary Wanderers—Jesus and Ahasuerus—once more encountered each other in sight of the crosses, they could only have hung side by side; he who gave the blow in Jerusalem, now conceivably the one person in Rome able to recognise the freshly-crucified from a cross of his own—the cross of his race. From another poet have come the words which typical Ahasuerus might, after the experience of so many centuries, speak to the fellow-sufferer he once had insulted:

"Thou art the Judge. We are bruised thus,
But, the judgment over, join sides with us!
Thine too is the cause! and not more Thine
Than ours is the work of these dogs and swine,
Whose life laughs through and spits at their creed,
Who maintain Thee in word, and defy Thee in deed!

"We withstood Christ then? be mindful how,
At least we withstand Barabbas now!
Was our outrage sore? but the worst we spared,
To have called these—Christians, had we dared!
Let defiance of them pay mistrust of Thee,
And Rome make amends for Calvary!

"By the torture prolonged from age to age,
By the infamy, Israel's heritage,
By the Ghetto's plague, by the garb's disgrace,
By the badge of shame, by the felon's place,

By the branding tool, the bloody whip,
And the summons to Christian fellowship—

"We boast our proof that at least the Jew,
Would wrest Christ's name from the Devil's crew
Thy face took never so deep a shade,
But we fought them in it, God our aid!
A trophy to bear, as we march, Thy band,
South, east, and on to the Pleasant Land!"*

Holy-Cross Day was appropriate for this work of striking the Jewish race in the face, as they fainted at the Christian door, and showing them now themselves the crucified, by a High Priest Christ taught to hate his enemies and pierce them with nail and spear. For it was about the time of the alleged discovery of the True Cross, already noticed, that this fable of the Wandering Jew probably first began its career.†

* Robert Browning: "Holy-Cross Day."

† "Quel est donc l'origine et la date de cette légende? Je la crois, comme celle du voile de sainte Véronique et généralment comme toutes les histoires relatives à la Passion, née vers le quatrième siècle, à Constantinople, et contemporaine de sainte Hélène et de la découverte de la vraie croix. Mais ces traditions sont restées longtemps orales."—*Revue des Deux Mondes*, Dec. 1, 1833. Published as introduction to Quinet's "Ahasuerus." Goethe connects Saint Veronica with Ahasuerus in the plan of his intended work elsewhere given. Veronica, whose name means the *true portrait* (*i.e.* of Christ which was retained on the apron with which she wiped the sweat from his face), would be a natural counterpart of the man who refused all succour to the fainting sufferer. In enthusiasm about the *true cross* might be born a myth of the *true image*, and of a "witness" to both.

Already at that time it was shown on the walls of imperial Christendom that Jesus and Ahasuerus, as types of Humanity, had changed places—the nails and the thorn-crown transferred from one to the other; and, what is more, the cruel dogmas and superstitions abandoned by the one made by the other into the established religion of Europe.

In the familiar legend of the True Cross, Helena is for a time baffled by a certain Judas, who has occult sources of knowledge, and warns the Jews that the empress is coming to find what, if found, will cause the downfall of their religion. But she having threatened a general massacre, the Jews inform her that this Judas can alone reveal the place of the cross. He refuses; is starved at the bottom of a dry well for six days; on the seventh, consents. When the cross appears, Judas is converted by its miracles and baptized.

In a paper read to the New Shakspeare Society, April 9th, 1875, Miss Toulmin Smith announced her discovery that the story of the "Pound of Flesh" is contained in the thirteenth century English poem, "*Cursor Mundi*," there interwoven with the legend of the Finding of the Holy Cross. A Christian goldsmith, in the service of Queen Helena, owes a sum of money to a Jew; if he cannot pay it at a certain time he is

to render the weight of the wanting money in his own flesh. The bond is forfeit; the Jew prepares to cut the flesh; but the judges decide that no drop of blood must be shed. The Jew being thus defeated, Queen Helena declares that he must give up all his goods to the State and lose his tongue. This sentence is remitted on his agreeing to tell her where the Holy Cross is hidden,—which he did.

It might easily arise, as a saga on this Jew's knowledge, that he had personally participated in the hiding of the Cross, just after the crucifixion, and had been miraculously preserved through centuries as "a witness" to reveal its place of concealment, and thereby also to be "a witness" to the truth of the Christian legend. This might even have been in the minds of those who gave him the name of Judas, though perhaps that is merely a token of homage to the True Cross, as potent enough to convert a Judas. It is in harmony with the endless plots and counterplots of the True Cross Tale that the traitor of Christ should live to become traitor to Antichrist. At the same time there is a suggestion in it of precise retribution in kind which naturally combines with the story of the "Pound of Flesh." It is highly probable that Shylock and the Eternal Jew are twins of the True Cross Mythology, though Ahasuerus be a later name and figure.

The famous Isaac of Norwich was a typical Jew in his time. A thirteenth century caricature, preserved in the Pell Office, shows us the popular notion of him. He is pictured as a three-faced idol surrounded by devils. The three faces are not especially ugly or comical, but repulsive enough ; and we may detect in the figure the reflection of a period when the diabolical theory of the Jew was serious, and no laughing matter. Similarly, in the old Miracle Plays, Satan was a serious figure, though he gradually became a mere laughing-stock,like Pantaloon in the pantomimes. The stage-Jew shared the same decline as the stage-devil—his supposed inspirer. In his malignant and formidable aspect he was, indeed, in Shakspeare's day, the main figure of Marlowe's popular play; but even he had the long nose and sundry grotesque features; and it can hardly be doubted that, in the still more ludicrous make-up of Shylock, the Globe Theatre followed the popular feeling.

Perhaps there may be hidden in the name Shylock the idea of a lock-shearer, shaver of the last hair from his victim; at any rate "the shearer sheared" would include the whole significance of the story which Shakspeare took in hand. In the character of Shylock, he retained the grotesquerie which might please the rabble, at the same time turning their scowl

to laughter. Even now, while Mr. Irving is giving his pathetic impersonation, the occasional laugh reminds us how easily some parts of the text would lend themselves to a farcical interpretation, if the painted nose and comic gestures were present. But it is more remarkable to observe how rare and superficial are these ludicrous incidents. The farcical Shylock has passed away from the English stage through force of the more real character which Shakspeare drew. Shakspeare may not have intended all the far-reaching moral belonging to the ancient legend of the pound of flesh, but surely no one can carefully compare his Shylock with the Barabas of his contemporary without recognising a purpose to modify and soften the popular feeling towards the Jew, to picture a man where Marlowe had painted a monster, if not indeed to mirror for Christians their own injustice and cruelty.

Let us take our stand beside Portia when she summons the Merchant and Shylock to stand forth. The two men have long legendary antecedents and have met many times before. There are eleven versions of the bond story in the early literature of Europe. In four of these versions no Jew appears. Karl Simrock believes that it is an ancient law-anecdote—an illustration of the law of retaliation pressed to an extreme.

The evidences he gives of its use for this purpose are interesting, and it appears to me probable that it might have been in this way that the Jew was first introduced into the story. Where a Jew and a Christian confronted each other in any issue it might be assumed that all mitigations of the *summum jus* were removed from the question ; only the naked technical terms of the law could then be conceived as restraining either from doing the utmost injury he could to the other. There is an old Persian version of the tale, in which, perhaps for a similar reason, a Moslem and an Armenian confront each other ; and in this case the failure of the bond is not because of the blood, but because of the extreme exactness of weight demanded by the court. An Egyptian form of the story has a similar end.

Side by side, in all ages and races, have struggled with each other the principle of Retaliation and that of Forgiveness. In religion the vindictive principle has euphemistic names : it is called law and justice. The other principle, that of remission, has had to exist by sufferance, and in nearly all religions has been recognised only in subordinate alliance with its antagonist. An eye for an eye, a tooth for a tooth, blood for blood, is primitive law. Projected into heaven, magnified in the divine majesty, it becomes the principle that a

deity cannot be just and yet a justifier of offenders. "Without the shedding of blood there is no remission of sins." Since finite man is naturally assumed to be incapable of directly satisfying an infinite law, all religions, based on the idea of a divine lawgiver, are employed in devising schemes by which commutations may be secured and vicarious satisfactions of divine law obtained. Nature never forgives. No deity inferred from the always relentless forces of nature has ever been supposed able to forgive the smallest sin until it was exactly atoned for. For this reason the divine mercifulness has generally become a separate personification. The story of the "Pound of Flesh" is one of the earliest fables concerning these conflicting principles.

The following legend was related to me by a Hindu, as one he had been told in his childhood. The chief of the Indian triad, Indra, pursued the god Agni. Agni changed himself to a dove in order to escape; but Indra changed himself to a hawk, to continue the pursuit. The dove took refuge with Vishnu, second person of the triad, the Hindu Saviour. Indra flying up, demanded the dove; Vishnu, concealing it in his bosom, refused to give up the dove. Indra then took an oath that if the dove were not surrendered he would tear from Vishnu's breast an amount of flesh equal to the body of the dove. Vishnu still refused to

surrender the bird, but bared his breast. The divine hawk tore from it the exact quantity, and the drops of blood—the blood of a Saviour—as they fell to the ground wrote the scriptures of the Vedas.

Among the various versions of this story in India I have not been able to find any in accepted sacred books preserving with the simplicity of this folk-tale the ancient moral antagonism between the deities afterwards found in alliance as a triad. Hindu orthodoxy has outgrown the phase of faith which could sanction that probably provincial legend. Its spirit survives in one of Vishnu's titles, Yadjña Varâha, "the boar of sacrifice," derived from Vishnu's third incarnation, by which he saved the world from demons by becoming himself a victim. We may see in the fable reflection of a sacrificial age, an age in which the will and word of a god became inexorable fate, but also the dawning conception of a divineness in the mitigation of the law, which ultimately adds saving man-gods or demi-gods to nature-gods that cannot be appeased.

The earliest version, probably B.C. 300, is the story in the Mahábhárata (*Vana parva*) of the trial of the best of mankind, King Usinára. Indra and Agni, wishing to test his fidelity to the laws of righteousness, assume the forms of falcon and pigeon. The latter (Agni) pursued by the former (Indra) seeks and

receives the king's protection. The falcon demands the pigeon, and is refused on the ground that it is written that to kill a twice-born man, to kill a cow, and to abandon a being that has taken refuge with one, are equal sins. This is a quotation from the Laws of Manu. The falcon argues that it is the law of nature that it shall feed on pigeons, and a statute against nature is no law. He (the falcon) will be starved, consequently his mate and little ones must perish, and thus in preserving one the king will slay many. The falcon is offered by Usinára other food—a boar, bull, gazelle—but the falcon declares that it is not the law of its nature to eat such things. The king then declares that he will not give up the pigeon, but he will give anything else in his power which the falcon may demand. The falcon replies that he can only accept a quantity of the king's own flesh equal in weight to the pigeon's body. Usinára gladly accedes to this substitution. Balances are produced, and the pigeon is placed in one scale. The king cuts off a piece of his flesh that appears large enough, but is insufficient; he cuts again and again, but still the pigeon outweighs his piled-up flesh. Finally, all his flesh gone, the king gets into the scale himself. The two gods then resume their divine shape, announce to Usinára that for the sacrifice he has made he will be

glorified in all worlds throughout eternity, and the king ascends transfigured into heaven.

This legend is repeated under the title *Syena-Kapotiyam* (Dove and Hawk) in the *Purana Sarvasvan* in the Bodleian Library, where it is in Bengali characters. There is another version in the *Markandêyâ Purâna* (ch. iii.), in which Indra appears to the sage Vipulasvan in the form of a large famished bird. Finding that this bird can only be nourished by human flesh, the sage appeals to his sons to give it some of their flesh; and on their refusal he curses them, and tells the bird that after he has performed certain funeral ceremonies his body shall be for its nourishment. Whereupon Indra bids the sage abandon his body only by the power of contemplation, reveals his divine nature, and offers Vipulasvan whatever he may ask.

Indra here says, "I eat no living creature," which shows a moral advance. Perhaps his conversion may have been in some measure due to the teaching of Buddha. It is instructive to compare the Mahábhárata legend with an early Buddhist version cited by M. Focaux from the *Dsang-lǫung*,* a version all the more significant because the hero of it, Sivi, was traditionally the son of Usinára and had already appeared

* *Le Mahabarata*, p. 241.

in the fourth book of Mahábhárata as tried in the same way with his father, and with the same results. Sivi had become a popular type of self-sacrifice. According to the Buddhist legend, Indra, perceiving that his divine existence was drawing to a close, confided to Visvakarman* his grief at not seeing in the world any man who would become a Buddha. Visvakarman declared King Sivi such a man. The falcon and pigeon test is then applied. But the Buddhist Sivi does not, like his Brahman prototype, offer to compensate the falcon with the flesh of other animals. He agrees to give his own flesh. The gods descend and weep tears of emotion at seeing the king as a skeleton outweighing the dove which all of his flesh could not equal. Nor is the Buddhist saint caught up to heaven. He is offered the empire and throne of Indra himself, but refuses it; he desires only to be a Buddha. Sivi's body is restored to greater beauty than before, and he becomes the Buddha amid universal joy.

Other versions show the legend further detached from brahmanic ideas, and resting more completely upon Buddha's compassionateness to all creatures. Of this description is one in the "Sermons" by Asphagosha, for the translation of which I am in-

* The 'omnificent,' who offered up all worlds in a general sacrifice, and ended by sacrificing himself.

debted to Professor Beal. Sakra (a name of Indra) tempted by a heretic to believe that the teaching of Buddha was false, and that men followed it from motives of self-interest, sought for a perfect man who was practising austerities solely for the sake of becoming a Buddha. Finding one, Sivaka Raja, he agreed with Visvakarman to tempt him. All happens as in the old legend, except that Sivaka rests his refusal not upon the law of Manu, nor upon the sanctity of asylum, but upon his love of all living things. To this his mercifulness the falcon appeals, reminding him of its own young, and Sivaka calls for a knife and cuts off a piece of his flesh, not caring whether it is more or less than the body of the dove. He then faints. All living creatures raise lamentations, and the deities, much affected, heal the wound.

The influence of Buddhism is traceable in the modifications of the original legend, which show the sacrifice not accepted as it was in the case of Vishnu, and to some extent in that of Usinára, whose earthly life terminates. With Buddha the principle of remission supersedes that of sacrifice. His argument against the Brahmanic sacrifice of life was strong. When they pointed to these predatory laws of nature in proof of their faith that the gods approved the infliction of pain and death, he asked them why they did

not sacrifice their own children ; why they did not offer to the gods the most valuable lives. The fact was that they were outgrowing direct human sacrifices—preserving self-mortifications—and animals were slain in commutation of costlier offerings. This moral revolution is traceable in the gradual constitution of Vishnu as a Saviour. There is a later legend that Vishnu approached Sivi in the form of a Brahman in want of food, but would accept none except the flesh of Sivi's son Vrihad-Garbha. The king killed and cooked his son and placed the food before the Brahman, who then bade him eat it himself. Sivi prepared to do so, when Vishnu stayed his hand, revealed himself, restored the son to life, and vanished. This legend belongs to a transitional period. Its outcome is found in several Hindu folk-tales, one of which has been told by the charming story-teller, Mr. W. R. S. Ralston. The king of a country is dying, and a poor man is informed of the fact by a disguised "fate." He asks if there is no way to save the king's life, and is told there is but one way ; if a child should be sacrificed, with its own consent, that would save the king. The man returns home and proposes to his wife to slay their beautiful little boy. She consents ; the boy having also consented, the knife is about to descend on the child, when the fates appear, an-

nouncing that they only wished to try his loyalty to his king, who had already recovered.

We may feel pretty certain that originally that king was a deity, though not so certain that the knife was arrested without killing anything at all. In several popular fables we find the story preserved essentially in the old sacrificial form, to teach the rewards of self-sacrifice, though, in order to escape the scandal of a human sacrifice, the self-devotion is ascribed to animals. Thus, in the *Panchatantra*, a pigeon roasts itself to save a famished bird-catcher, who had just captured his mate; and the bird-catcher presently seeing its radiant form rising to heaven, spends his life consuming his flesh in the fire of devotion, in order that he also may ascend there.

In the Hebrew story corresponding to that of Vishnu and Sivi, the Hindu Abraham, we may see that where a god is concerned the actual sacrifice cannot be omitted. That may do in the case of a dying king or hungry hawk, but not for a deity. In the case of Abraham and Isaac the demand is not remitted but commuted. The ram is accepted instead of Isaac. But even so much concession could hardly be recognized by the Hebrew priesthood as an allowable variation from a direct demand of Jahve, and so the command is said to have been given by Elohim, its

modification by Jahve. The cautious transformation is somewhat in the spirit of the disguises of the Aryan deities, who may partially revoke as gods the orders they gave as hawks. It would indicate a more advanced idea if we found Jahve remitting a claim of his own instead of one made by the Elohim.

It is worthy of a remark that in some regions where this change of names in the story of Abraham's sacrifice is overlooked or unknown by Semitic religionists, there has sprung up a tradition that the sacrifice was completed, and the patriarch's son miraculously restored to life. Thus, in another branch of the Jewish religion we find Mohammed flinching at the Biblical story. He does not like to admit that Allah altered his word and purpose except for a serious consideration, so he says, "We ransomed him with a noble victim." The Moslems believe that Isaac was not then born, and that it was Ishmael across whose throat Abraham actually drew the knife, which was miraculously kept from killing the lad, according to some, but others say resulted in a death and resurrection.

In the year 1879 the highly educated State of Massachusetts was thrilled with horror by the tidings that a man named Freeman had offered up his beautiful and only child, Edith Freeman, as a sacrifice to

God. It occurred in the historical town of Pocasset. A thousand years ago the Northmen who first discovered America wintered there, and possibly they there offered human sacrifices to their god Odin—that is, if they got hold of one or two red men; for there has been a notable tendency among men in such cases to prefer other victims than themselves for their gods. Since that first landing of white men in America the religion of Odin had yielded to that of Christ; Pocasset and all New England had been converted to Christianity; the Bible had found its way into every home. Yet this well-to-do citizen, Mr. Freeman, and his wife, had learned in Sunday School about Abraham's touching proof of his faith. They had pondered the lesson until they heard the voice of Abraham's God summoning them to a similar sacrifice, and they committed a deed which probably would have shocked even those rude Vikings who wintered at Pocasset a thousand years before. So much might the worship of a pitiless primitive deity arrest the civilisation of a household in the land of Channing and Parker. They prayed over the little girl, then the knife was plunged into her heart. Little Edith is now in her grave. The God of Abraham and Isaac got his pound of flesh this time. The devout priest of that horrible altar has just passed from his prison to an

asylum. To the many who have visited him he puts questions hard to be answered. "Do you believe the Bible or not?' he says. "If you do, and have read the account of Abraham, why should you deny that God could require a man to sacrifice his child? He so required of me. I *did* hope and believe that he would stay my hand before the blow fell. When he did not I still believed he would raise my child to life. But that is his own affair. I have given that which I loved most to God because He commanded me." The American people waited to see whether a Christian community which trains up children to admire the faith of Abraham would hang them when they grow up to imitate that faith so impressed upon them. The embarrassing dilemma was escaped after eight months, by getting Freeman into an asylum for the insane, without trial. A rather mean way of confessing that theocratic piety is republican insanity!

I observed, soon after the occurrence of this tragedy, a picture of it in the *Police News* exposed in the shop windows of London. The designer had placed a crucifix near the little victim's head. It is probable that Freeman and his wife never saw a crucifix in their lives; they belong to the hardest, baldest dogmatic Protestantism. The rude artist perhaps placed the crucifix in his picture because the Abrahamic sacrifice was

supposed to be typical of a holier one—a sacrifice in which a Son was offered up to satisfy the fatal law of a Father. In the human sacrifice symbolised by that crucifix culminated all these sacrifices of which mention has been made; and there was embodied that principle which has maintained through the ages that though to forgive may be human, to avenge is divine.

Let us return now to Shylock and the Merchant whose life is forfeit. Shylock is a primæval Jew; he represents the law, the letter and rigour of it. He is Indra tearing Vishnu's breast; Elohim demanding Isaac's death; the First Person exacting the Second Person's atoning blood. His bond, his oath registered in heaven, its sanction by Venetian law, are by him identified with eternal justice. It is the irrevocable "thing spoken," *fatum*, weird, or word. Portia is exact in telling him that he represents that "justice" in whose course, "none of us should see salvation.' The Jew personates his ancient god precisely. Nor is there wanting a certain majesty in his position. There is nothing mean about Shylock now, whatever there may have been at first. He has been called avaricious. But, as we have already seen (XII.), the wealth of the Jews was the main factor in their survival. There is, indeed, an illustration of this in the only version of the Bond legend which makes any pretension to be

considered historical. A Jew named Cenéda forfeited a pound of his flesh to a Christian merchant, on a wager; the case was brought before the Pope, Sixtus V., who decided that the Christian must pay two thousand scudi to his treasury for attempting manslaughter, and the Jew pay in an equal sum for having hazarded his life, that being a taxable property belonging to the Pope. Balzac tells us of a mediæval seneschal in France who declared the Jews to be the best taxgatherers in his region. It was his custom to let them gain money as bees collect honey: then he would swoop down on their hive and take it all away. The Jews were driven by oppressive statutes to the dealings in money which brought opprobrium upon them; and in hating Antonio because he lent money without interest, and so lowered the rate of usance in Venice, Shylock was hating him for undermining the existence of his tribe. Shylock scorns thrice his principal. For now he has been summoned by his own woes, the taking away of his daughter and his property, including that ring mourned because given by his lost Leah—artfully contrasted with the surrender by the Christian lovers of the rings they had vowed never to part with—to stand forth as an avenger of the ages of wrong heaped upon his race. That is an Elohistic moment for

Shylock, and ducats become dross in its presence. When the full tidings of his woes and wrongs are told him he cries, "The curse never fell upon our nation till now: I never felt it till now." Thenceforth we may see in Shylock the impersonation of the divine avenger of a divinely chosen people, and the majesty of his law confronting an Edomite world.

On the other hand stands Antonio, representing rather feebly, until he too is summoned from being a mere rich merchant to become a shorn victim, the opposite principle. He stands for the Christ, the Forgiver, the Sufferer. In the course of its travels the legend had combined with one told by Hyginus. The patriot Moros having conspired to rid his country of its tyrant, falls into the hands of that tyrant, Dionysius of Sicily, who orders him to be crucified. But Moros is allowed a respite and absence of three days to visit his sister, his friend Selenuntius having agreed to become his hostage. On his way back, Moros is impeded by a swollen river, and when he reaches the place of execution finds his friend on the point of being nailed to the cross. The two friends now insist each on being crucified for the other, at which sight Dionysius is so affected that he releases both, resolves to be a more humane king, and asks the friends to take him as "the third in their bond of friendship."

It is remarkable that this legend (which suggested to Schiller his ballad *Die Bürgschaft*, the Suretyship) should have been a popular one at the beginning of the Christian era, introducing as it does an exactor of vicarious suffering—that too by a cross—and ending with the tyrant becoming one in a trinity of friendship.

Shakespeare has brought this vicarious feature into a prominence it never had in any version he could ever have seen, and his art, creating as it must in organic consistency, has dramatised the psychological history of mankind.

Antonio, the merchant called on to suffer, is the man who gained nothing at all from the bond. He has incurred the danger and penalty in order that his rather worthless friend Bassanio may get the money necessary to secure a rich marriage which shall free him from his debts. It is the just suffering for the unjust. Antonio is the man who gives, hoping for nothing again ; in low simplicity he lends out money gratis ; and, when Shylock agrees to lend the three thousand ducats, the merchant says, "This Hebrew will turn Christian ; he grows kind." At the trial, Antonio speaks like the predestined victim :

> I am a tainted wether of the flock,
> Meetest for death.

And, when the trial is over, Antonio is the only man

who offers to relax his hold on the Jew's property. He gives up his own half, and takes the other only to give it away to Shylock's daughter and her husband.

To be kind Antonio calls Christian ; but it was not that spirit which finally brought Shylock into the same fold with his judges. His life is spared on condition of his becoming a Christian. Professor Morley and other critics say that was harsh. But Shylock is no longer a genuine Jew, and Shakespeare properly relieves that race of his connection. The Jews had indeed, in primitive ages, begun with the eye-for-an-eye principle, but fiery trials had long taught them patience under injury. Shylock, reminding Antonio, when he asks help, of his outrages, says :

> Still have I borne it with a patient shrug,
> For sufferance is the badge of all our tribe.

So had it been for many ages, and the Jew had relegated the principle of vengeance to his fossil theology, practically becoming the patient victim ; while, on the other hand, Christianity, reaching the throne, had antiquated Christ's principle of mercy, and was dealing out the rigours of the Judaic law which Israel had outgrown by suffering. Shylock had grandly asserted the humanity of the Jew, in the first words of that kind ever heard in Europe ; but he had gone on to assert his *Christianized* nature. "If we are like

you in the rest, we will be like you in that. If a Jew wrong a Christian, what is his humility? revenge; if a Christian wrong a Jew, what should his sufferance be by Christian example? why, revenge. The villainy you teach me I will execute." But when Shylock thus repairs back to the old eye-for-an-eye spirit, when he draws from the armoury of the ancient law the old weapon of retaliation, it is only to find that the sacrificial knife grown rusty for a Jew is bright and keen enough in Christian hands. In pressing to practise the blood-atonement and vicarious principle he enters upon Christian ground, and Shakspeare rightly baptizes him a Christian.

We may naturally question whether Shakspeare meant this irony. Did he intend any subtle hit when he made these Christians claim as a co-religionist, ripe for baptism, a man who had just attempted to take a fellow-man's life? That cannot be affirmed; but it is notable that there should be in the play another passage liable to that construction. Shylock's enemies have just converted his daughter Jessica into a good Christian; and the first sign of the work of grace in her heart is the facility with which she steals and squanders her father's money. Shakspeare does not fail to connect with this pious robbery the Christian customs of the time towards Jews. When

the robbery and elopement have been planned, the Jew's Christian servant, Lancelot, says to Jessica :

> There will come a Christian by
> Will be worth a Jewess' eye.

That seems to be a play upon the then familiar phrase "worth a Jew's eye"—a Jew having often to pay an enormous sum in order to avoid having his eye put out. With that Christian usage the poet apparently connects the robbery of Shylock's treasure. So by adopting the Christian usage of the time, by saying to Antonio what King John said to the Jews —"Your money or your flesh"—Shylock had given evidence of a change of heart, and his right place was in the Christian fold.

But among all these representative figures of the Venetian court-room, transformations from the flying doves and pursuing hawks, bound victims and exacting deities of ancient mythology, there is one who possesses a significance yet to be considered. That is Portia. Who is this gentle woman in judicial costume? She is that human heart which in every age, amid hard dogmatic systems and priestly intolerance, has steadily appealed against the whole vindictive system—whether Jewish or Christian—and, even while outwardly conforming, managed to rescue human love and virtue from it. With his wonted yet

ever-marvellous felicity, Shakspeare has made the genius of this human sentiment slipping through the technicalities of priest-made law a woman. In the mythology of dooms and spells it is often that by the seed of the woman they are broken : the Prince must remain a Bear till Beauty shall offer to be his bride ; the Flying Dutchman shall find repose if a maiden shall voluntarily share his sorrow. It is, indeed the woman-soul which has silently veiled the rude hereditary gods and laws of barbarism—the pitiless ones—with a host of gentle saints and intercessors, until the heartless systems have been left to theologians. Inside the frowning buttresses of dogmatic theology the heart of woman has built up for the home a religion of sympathy and charity.

Portia does not argue against the technique of the law. She agrees to call the old system justice—so much the worse for justice. In the outcome she shows that this so-called justice is no justice at all. And when she has shown that the letter of "justice" kills, and warned Shylock that he can be saved from the fatal principle he has raised only by the spirit that gives life, she is out of the case, save for a last effort to save him from the blind law he has invoked. The Jew now sues before a Christian Shylock. And Portia—like Mary, and all sweet interceding

spirits that ever softened stern gods in human hope —turns from the judicial Jahves of the bench to the one forgiving spirit there. "What mercy can you render him, Antonio?" The Christian Gratiano interposes, "A halter gratis: nothing else, for God's sake." A natural appeal for the victim-loving God; but the forgiving Christ is heard, however faintly, above the Christian, and Antonio forgives his part of Shylook's penalty.

"Vengeance is mine," says the deity derived by fear from the remorseless course of sun and star, ebb and flow, frost and fire. Forgiveness is the attribute of man. We may reverse Portia's statement, and say that, instead of Mercy dropping as the gentle rain from heaven, it is projected into heaven from compassionate human hearts beneath. And heavenly power doth then show likest man's when mercy seasons the vengeance of nature. From the wild forces above not only droppeth gentle rain, but thunder and lightning, famine and pestilence; it is man with his lightning-rod, his sympathy, his healing art, who turns them from their path and interposes a shield from their fury. When, as the two walked together in the night, Leigh Hunt looked up to the heaven of stars, and said, "God, the Beautiful," Carlyle looked, and said, "God, the Terrible." It was the ancient worshipper

of the Laws of Nature beside Abou ben Adhem, who loving not the Lord, yet loved his fellow men, and sees a human sweetness in the stars. All religions, beginning with trembling sacrifices to elemental powers personified —powers that never forgive—end with the worship of an ideal man, the human lover and Saviour. That evolution is invariable. Criticism may find this or that particular deified man limited and imperfect, and may discard him. It may take refuge in pure theism, as it is called. But it amounts to the same thing. What it worships is still a man—an invisible, vast man, but still a man. To worship eternal love, supreme wisdom, ideal moral perfection, is still to worship man, for we know such attributes only in man. Therefore the Shylock-principle is non-human nature, hard natural law moving remorselessly on its path from cause to effect; the Portia-principle, the quality of Mercy, means the purely human religion, which, albeit for a time using the terms of ancient nature-worship and alloyed with its spirit, must be steadily detached from these, and on the ruins of every sacrificial altar and dogma build the temple whose only services shall be man's service to man.

XIV.

THE WANDERING JEW IN FOLK-LORE.

IN the East and South, beneath climes that suggest an ideal paradise of repose or idle felicity, the undying saints were represented as dwelling in enchanted islands far from the toiling world, or slumbering in secret grottoes, while those whose immortality was a doom were compelled to roam restlessly over the earth. But when these myths had migrated into the active regions of Europe they were steadily transformed. It was felt to be hardly a satisfactory distribution of parts for the saintly immortals to be sleeping or enjoying themselves with fairies while the evil ones were so busy careering through earth and air. So, gradually the saintly sleepers awake. The Seven Sleepers sally forth as the Seven Champions of Christendom. Joseph of Arimathea cannot lie down in his sacred sepulchre which he had given for the body of Jesus, and becomes a holy wanderer.

St. James emerges from the rock which had closed around his body like soft wax, and leads Spain against the Moors. St. John does not rest in his grotto at Ephesus, but makes pilgrimages, on one of which he asks alms of Edward the Confessor, near Westminster Abbey, who gives to the mendicant a gold ring, afterwards sent him from the East, with the saint's benediction. St. Peter goes abroad also. When the first Abbot of Westminster is about to be ordained in the Abbey, St. Peter appears in the night, crosses the Thames in a boat, himself ordains the Abbot, and leaves a wondrous fish to convince the Archbishop next day that the consecration has been performed, rendering the future Deans of Westminster responsible to Peter alone, and able to preach what heresies they like, without episcopal interference. Popular superstition is sometimes good-hearted, and liberated even the sorcerer Merlin from his prison of air, as appears in the lines of Southey:

> "In his crystal ark
> Whither sail'd Merlin with his band of bards,
> Old Merlin, master of the mystic lore;
> Belike his crystal ark, instinct with life,
> Obedient to the mighty Master, reached
> The land of the Departed."*

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* *Madoc*, xi. This, however, is contrary to Welsh orthodoxy. I remember being present at a dinner-company in Wales, given

thee what thou shalt do; and, by the help and power of Almighty God above, thou shalt be well. To-morrow, when thou risest up, go into thy garden, and get there two leaves of red sage and one of bloodworte, and put them into a cup of thy small beere. Drink as often as need require, and when the cup is empty, fill it again, and put in fresh leaves every fourth day, and thou shalt see, through our Lord's great goodness and mercy, before twelve dayes shall be past, thy disease shall be cured and thy body altered."' After this simple prescription, Wallis pressed him to eat. But he said, 'No, friend, I will not eat; the Lord Jesus is sufficient for me. Very seldom doe I drinke any beere neither, but that which comes from the rocke. So, friend, the Lord God be with thee.' So saying, he departed, and was never more heard of; but the patient got well within the given time, and for many a long day there was war hot and fierce among the divines of Stamford, as to whether the stranger was an angel or a devil. His dress had been minutely described by honest Sam. His coat was purple, and buttoned down to the waist; 'his britches of the same couler, all new to see to;' his stockings were very white, but whether linen or jersey, deponent knoweth not; his beard and head were white, and he had a white stick in his hand. The day was rainy from

morning to night, 'but he had not one spot of dirt upon his clothes.' Aubrey gives an almost exactly similar relation, the scene of which he places in the Staffordshire moorlands. He there appears in a purple shag gown,' and prescribes balm-leaves."

Brand mentions having seen one of these 'impostors' going about Newcastle-on-Tyne, followed by a crowd, and murmuring to himself "Poor Jack all alone!" Probably Brand did not hear the phrase rightly, since the cry of the Wanderer was "Poor Joe all alone!" There was a crossing-sweeper near St. Paul's Churchyard, who murmured the same, of whom there is an engraving in the British Museum. A picture of the Newcastle man was made for the Musgraves of Eden Hall, which has beneath it "Poor Joe all alone!" My friend Mr. W. B. Scott, who once resided at Newcastle, writes that he remembers hearing of him. "He seemed to have left an impression of a somewhat respectful kind, but from what cause I never heard; probably he had a history of a melancholy kind, and had been left alone by some calamity."

This, so far as I can learn, was the last appearance in the world of any man pretending to be the Wandering Jew, if indeed he did so pretend, and the honour was not thrust upon him by the superstitious crowd. There had been advantages enough in earlier times

to entice Ahasuerus, or "the famous Joseph," to make his appearance. He came as a "witness" for Christ; he was generally a pious Christian; a tradition tells of his gambling in Naples, but, as the people there invoke their saints for luck in gambling, the exception is not considerable. Jurisconsult Louvet heard him preaching to street crowds in a French province like a revivalist friar. But in England common sense gradually chilled the Wandering Jew. When it was found that he was not above receiving sixpences to support his imperishable existence the public lost interest in him.

A question addressed by me a few weeks ago to the *Newcastle Weekly Chronicle* elicited the following answer:

"It is quite true that a man who was known as 'The Wandering Jew' lived in Newcastle during the latter part of last century. He left a son, who I believe has lived in Hull the greater part of this century, and who is now a very old man indeed, keeping a small public-house named the Cricketers' Arms. He is very eccentric, is known as 'Topper, the Newcastle Fossil,' and attracts a deal of attention on account of his appearance and the condition of his house. He is a very peculiar-looking man, with

features of a decided Jewish cast. His clothes appear to be as old as himself. He has never been known to be clean; and old people in Hull do not remember the counter or door of his house to have been washed. He is supposed to be emulating 'Thirty Thick' of London in this respect.

"GEORGE CLARKE."

Hull.

This may be regarded as the epitaph upon an ancient dream which branched into a vast and various mythology, and, in its time, bore for millions their hopes of a renovated earth, and their visions of resurrection from the sleep of death!

XV.

THE NEW AHASUERUS IN GERMANY.

HAVING, as a figure of popular faith, gathered to him all related elements of mould and decay, and found fit extinction in the Newcastle "fossil" just mentioned, Ahasuerus rises for new wanderings as a poetic ideal.

The Germans were the first to deal seriously with our legend, and their literature of the Wandering Jew is indicated in this chapter. The subject attracted the unhappy DANIEL FRIEDRICH SCHUBART during his imprisonment. Carlyle, in the notes to his *Life of Schiller*, says the idea of making old *Joannes a temporibus*, the 'Wandering,' or, as Schubart's countrymen denominate him, the 'Eternal Jew,' into a novel hero was a mighty favourite with him. "In this antique cordwainer, as on a raft at anchor in the stream of time, he would survey the changes and wonders of two thousand years: the Roman and the Arab were

to figure there, the Crusader and the Circumnavigator, the Eremite and the Thebaid, and the Pope of Rome. Joannes himself, the Man existing out of Time and Space—Joannes, the unresting and undying—was to be a deeply tragic personage. Schubart warmed himself with this idea, and talked about it in his cups, to the astonishment of simple souls. He even wrote a certain rhapsody connected with it, which is published in his poems. But here he rested; and the project of the Wandering Jew, which Goethe likewise meditated in his youth, is still unexecuted. Goethe turned to other objects, and poor Schubart was surprised by death in the midst of his schemes, on the 10th of October, 1791." But the project, as we shall see, is not unexecuted.

Schubart's *Rhapsody* appeared in his "Poems, Frankfort, 1787."* His Ahasuerus has retired into the wild solitudes of Mount Carmel. There he is seen, with frantic laughter, casting away the dry skulls of his relatives, which break to pieces, crying, "That is my father! Those are my wives! these my children! They could die, but I—outcast—cannot die!"

* The outlines of German poems that follow, are condensed from a pamphlet entitled:—*Die Sage vom 'Ewigen Juden,' ihre poetische Wandlung und Fortbildung.* Von Friedrich Helbig. Berlin, 1874. For this pamphlet and assistance in its translation I am indebted to Fräulein Almata Jacobi (Bremen).

And again, "Jerusalem fell; I crushed the babe, I rushed into the flames, cursed the Roman!—Rome fell, whole nations perished, and—I remained!" He tries to kill himself in different ways, but in vain. He feels pain acutely, but has to endure every variety of it, even to the agonies of the moment of death, without this moment ever arriving. The snake bites him, the dragon tortures, the burning forest blisters him. He says to himself, "Under my feet the mine exploded and threw me high into the air; senseless I fell down, and found myself roasted amidst blood, and brains, and bones." He is obliged to carry on a corpse-like body, infirm, smelling of the grave; and through thousands of years he must see, like a yawning monster, an everlasting sameness. The rhapsody brings the Wanderer to a peaceful end. Ahasuerus throws himself down from the top of Carmel into the abyss, "and night covers his bushy eyelids. An angel carries him into a recess in the rocks. 'There mayest thou sleep now,' says the angel; 'sleep, Ahasuerus, sleep soundly! God's anger does not last for ever.'"

In 1807 appeared the ballad of *The Eternal Jew*, by ALOYS SCHREIBER. The torture of this Ahasuerus consists in his not being able to enjoy life and nature, open to all other men, on account of his restlessness.

He cannot drink the water of the fountain, he cannot rest in the shade of a tree, he cannot break a flower to enjoy its smell, for which he longs; he must start, he must wander. In this he differs from Schubart's Ahasuerus, who had long been weary of life. Being continually obliged to renounce everything, he at last becomes timid, shy; he flies all men and hurries on heedlessly. Finally he observes a crucifix by the wayside; about to rush on, an impulse brings him to his knees, imploring the Crucified for forgiveness. Christ answers him from the cross, "Whoever has failed may repent; and none who loves and believes in me shall need to shun my countenance." The Wanderer is found dead, kneeling before the cross.

WILHELM MÜLLER, in his *Wanderlieder* (published in his works, 1830) has a poem on "The Eternal Jew," which pictures the desolation and loneliness that torture a life satiated to disgust, longing for rest and death. It is pervaded by melancholy. "Although I have seen everything I am never allowed to rest!" All around him has an end: the river in the ocean, the eagle on the Alps, the cloud in the falling rain, and also "to the tired wanderer a certain limit has been fixed. What, does he complain of his day's misery?—before night death will have taken him home." The end of the poem is a wish of the poor

Wanderer that those who have finished their earthly pilgrimage might, ere they go to sleep for ever, ask of God one hour's rest for him.

NIKOLAUS LENAU has treated the subject in a similar manner. The scenery of his poem, *Ahasuerus, the Eternal Jew*, is a lonely heath. In a distant meadow shepherds are seen surrounding and weeping over the corpse of a beloved youth. Whilst they are thus standing a Wanderer passes that way: his hair is grey, his countenance pale, cold, deeply wrinkled; his beard long and white, his fiery eyes in dark sockets. He walks on to the bier, and calls out, with mingled mockery and mournfulness, "Suppress your ungrateful tears; his rest is good; oh yes, his rest is good! Though fools like you complain, his heart is still; while mine beats on by night and day, in restless longing to find its sabbath in the grave!" The Wanderer utters the philosophy of Schopenhauer, explaining that the earth is only the lie of Paradise, that it is always the same old delusion of Time—all flowering to its destruction: a philosophy which terminates in a marriage with Madness, personified in Lenau himself.

Meanwhile, says the poem, the shepherds cover the coffin. Suddenly the stranger gets sight of the crucifix on the lid of the coffin. He is frightened, and

tears come to his eyes. Now the Lenau-Schopenhauer turns out to be Ahasuerus. He tells the story of his life in the usual form of the myth. He tells the different kinds of death he had vainly sought. Then he wanders on, on—on; above his head you hear the whizzing of the birds; a long shadow walks behind him; the shepherds tremble and make the sign of the cross.

Although ADALBERT VON CHAMISSO was by birth French, his life and culture were German; his mixed origin is shown in his subjective poem, the "New Ahasuerus" (1836), where the Wanderer is simply a lover whose mistress has married another! This rejected lover compares himself to Ahasuerus, who cannot die or rest until the Day of Judgment, while the faithless lady represents the fallen city of Jerusalem. Ahasuerus says, "Time stands still before me; the age of man is as one moment, and the moments ages. Every hundred years I come once more to Jerusalem, mourning over its cold ashes, trying to put the ruins in their old place again, but nobody takes notice of me; evermore I come to the same thing—a grave!" Ahasuerus is "the son of sorrow turned into stone."

The poem of A. W. SCHLEGEL, "The Eternal Jew," follows the old myth, with nothing new. His Ahasuerus, on account of his unbelief, wanders through th

world as a solace for all those who are miserable, until the reappearance of Christ releases him.

JULIUS MOSEN is the first who treated the subject in a fuller and more independent way. His "Ahasuerus" (1838) is an epic. In the notes it is stated that the myth belongs to the poet's earliest recollections, the supposed Wandering Jew having passed through his birthplace, and that a shepherd had spoken to him. The poem carries this idea out with poetical realism. Mosen's idea of the myth is human nature imprisoned by an earthly existence. Ahasuerus symbolises the spirit of Tradition embodied in an individual being, who, at first in unconscious obstinacy, but at length deliberately, opposes himself to the God of Christendom. Mosen gives his Ahasuerus from the first a human trait. His deceased wife has left him two beautiful children, Eve and Reuben. A young Roman prince, living at Jerusalem, likes these children, and he wishes to take them with him to Rome. He applies to Pilate, who orders Ahasuerus to part with the children. The father in his desperation implores the assistance of Jesus, the new prophet. He will believe in him and his new doctrine, if he can save his children. Jesus will not grant such private wishes, but goes on to prophesy the fall of Jerusalem. Upon this Ahasuerus tears his clothes into pieces, and in

pain and wrath accuses Jesus of falsehood and imposture: "Thou art our God? And yet to save thou hast no power! If man or God, thou hast deceived the people!" When the Roman prince comes to fetch the children, Ahasuerus has slain them. In his despair he becomes more and more a disbeliever. What, he asks himself, did Israel commit to become so wretched? "Through its piety it has been led to misery. Why, then, does man crowd after this haughty God? I will cast off his memory; death to this Nazarene, to God, to everything!" In this excitement Ahasuerus scornfully forbids Jesus to rest at his door when he asks that favour. Jesus pronounces his sentence in these words, "Thou shalt live without rest thy immortality upon earth!"

The Archangel Michael appears and gives Ahasuerus a hope that mercy may be obtained at three different times of trial. The trials follow. Ahasuerus has married again and has once more two children, Eve and Reuben. Rome declares war against Judea, Titus surrounds Jerusalem; Ahasuerus is full of resentment against God, who declines to help, and in his anger sets the temple on fire. During the conflagration, with his children at his side, he enters the flames, which do not touch him. Eve's lover, Matthias, who has become a Christian, for that reason rejected by

Ahasuerus, serves in the Roman army and comes rushing through the flames to save his beloved. Ahasuerus bids him welcome as a suitor, and pushes him into the flames. His children shriek with terror, and Ahasuerus throws them both after him, crying, "Here, heartless God! now thou canst rejoice!"

The first trial thus passes without redemption for Ahasuerus, and the second comes. Ahasuerus, having tried all possible ways of suicide, at last addresses Death with an appeal for pity. Death replies that he has orders to pass him by until he shall believe in God. Ahasuerus refuses. He is once more father of two beautiful children, Leah and Reuben. He enjoys the purest happiness, when all at once, in a thunderstorm, the God of the Jews appears to renew the old league with him against Christ. Ahasuerus consents, and is sent to Julian the Apostate as the great adversary of Christendom. Ahasuerus arrives there in the very moment when the wounded Julian, under a night-vision of Christ, begins to doubt his pagan faith. Ahasuerus gains him back to his former antagonism, and obtains permission to rebuild the temple at Jerusalem. But during the building, a dispute breaks out among the workmen. All order is gone, the work is interrupted; one looks at another in amazement, when suddenly a prophet announces

that for the reconstruction of the temple, the God of Judea and the God of the Christians were contending; and that the latter could only be made to yield if the blood of two innocent children should soak the ground. Ahasuerus offers his own children. Before the sacrifice is finished, Christ invisibly takes the children to Himself. Then the earth is rent asunder; flames dart out and consume the new building.

The second trial having passed without saving Ahasuerus, twice a murderer of his own children, the third trial advances. In this Death passes, with souls that have found repose, before Ahasuerus. Ahasuerus is in mortal agony; his soul has nearly departed, but one point still remains, which no effort of his will can destroy. This point begins to assume a shape, a form once more. It is the same point of life which goes through all organic nature, and nowhere admits of destruction or state of rest. So our Wanderer, too, is once more filled with the wish to live. Again the God of Judea animates him to struggle against the doctrine of Christ. Again he follows his advice. He is now sent to Arabia, where Mohammed leads on the nations against the Cross. Ahasuerus allies himself with Mohammed to conquer Jerusalem; he calls his people together, but they will not hear him, they have only stones to throw at him who suffered so much for

their sake. Then, with tears in his eyes, Ahasuerus leaves them for ever, and bestows henceforth his love upon Humanity.

Mosen's Ahasuerus thus becomes a hero of Humanity, and his aims rise high above his first purpose. He is at the head of Mohammed's warriors, driving away the defenders of the Holy Sepulchre, menacing death to all who approach it. All fly away; two children only remain—his own. Ahasuerus embraces them, and rejoices to have found them at last. Then Mohammed reminds him that he has sworn death to whomsoever should approach the sepulchre. Ahasuerus now cries out in his grief. For the third time he falls under the curse of his disbelief. He calls for some one to slay him, and the third trial so releases him of his vow. Arrows dart through the air: the children fall; he, too, sinks down, to awake once more for fulfilment of his real mission. "One thing has been ended; another begins, that neither time nor dark eternity can end. Loosed from Him and His mercy, henceforth I begin a long struggle until I have saved mankind from Him." Ahasuerus declares an everlasting war against Christ, "in the name of all forces and powers, all sighs, all sorrows, shed tears and blood, broken spirits and crushed hearts." Christ accepts the combat: "Thou facest Me, Thought

against Thought. Wrestle on and on, until at last, the circle ended, the Day of Judgment shall decide!"

There the poem ends, or rather, as Helbig remarks, "does *not* end;" the end is put off to the day of the last Judgment. The struggle now only begins, never to end, between Ahasuerus and Christ, between Humanity and Christendom, between Earth and Heaven.

LUDWIG KÖHLER, too, makes the Wanderer a type of human tendency. His *New Ahasuerus* (1845) is a prophet of freedom. The sufferer he has derided says to him: "March on then for eternities, until veracity has found its residence on earth, filling it with purest brightness! until a golden Dawn as of springtide breaks, and Liberty awakes the light now hidden in night!" Often the Wanderer thinks this morning has come, and exults in his hope of rest; but his joy, his hopes are vain. Napoleon crushes the French Revolution, "the Burschenschaft" leads to the errors of Sand; the rebellious Greeks are betrayed, and so on. Everywhere is oppression of conscience and thought. Ahasuerus despairs, and complains that he cannot die, when suddenly Jesus addresses him with a rebuke: he tells Ahasuerus that he is unworthy of the longed-for liberty, so long as he has not mastered self

and sacrificed his egotism. "Thy grave, not humanity, was thine aim, so thou hast striven in vain. Liberty shall be aim, not instrument to thee. Whilst thou wert complaining of Destiny, it went its way, and Liberty began its heavenly progression. 'Tis no dream and delusion; ere thou thinkest, it sunders hell and displays its light. The world gets free. Already in the vale a stir is heard. Its reign is near!" With this vision of hope for the future the poet leaves us.

FRANZ HORN (1818) published in Fouqué's *Frauentaschenbuch* his novel "*The Eternal Jew.*" His Ahasuerus is a rich Jew in Jerusalem, who only believes in Christ's external mission. He thinks that Jesus, though for the time full of humility, will rule with a commanding sceptre when clad in purple, and by his healing power will extirpate disease and death from the earth. In this he is disappointed: Jesus is laughed at, despised, ill-treated, and endures all unresistingly. Mistaken in his dearest hopes, Ahasuerus conceives a deep hate against Jesus. So, when the latter, fallen under the burthen of his cross, asks for a moment's rest at his door, Ahasuerus drives him on without compassion. Then Christ rises, and says: "Well, receive then what thou wishest; live, live on, as never man before; die not till thou hast become worthy to die!"

And so it came: all around him died; everything became strange to him; only the sky above him remained the same. He comes to understand that Christ by his death has sealed death, and that he (Ahasuerus) by his life has to represent the insufficiency and misery of mere life. He moves on with aimless strides, his form as of iron, his visage weather-beaten like lichened stone, a nameless grief upon his features. The scene of the novel is laid at the end of the Thirty Years' War. Ahasuerus has saved a young count in the tumult of battle, and afterwards, by telling him the story of his life, converts him from the blasphemy and despair into which he had fallen by the sudden death of his family—a misfortune attributed to the appearance of Ahasuerus.

From this novel, AUGUST KLINGEMANN (1827) took the subject of his tragedy, *Ahasuerus.* The Wanderer was a favourite character with the distinguished actor Ludwig Devrient. With Klingemann the myth signifies purification by suffering in order to obtain an imperishable liberty. Christ appears as the mediator between natural and supernatural things, and points the wandering man to his coming empire. The hero of Klingemann's drama is the murderer of Gustavus Adolphus, the Count of Werth, a fanatical Catholic, who, in disguise of a

Protestant, has assassinated the champion of Protestantism. The deed weighs heavily on his soul, drives him to melancholy and despair, and he finally drowns his conscience in Atheism. The son of Gustavus Adolphus enters his family as a visitor; and in his presence, and that of his family, the guilty Count speaks of the deed with abhorrence. Only one person knows of his guilt—the mysterious man who saved him out of the battle. To get rid of him the assassin challenges him; but his lance breaks on the breast of the stranger—for it is Ahasuerus, he who has blasphemed his Lord, like the now atheistical Count of Werth. The curse upon him is that which strikes the Denier of God. Ahasuerus, after the fruitless combat, reveals to the count his story, and his longing to die, imploring him no longer to blaspheme God. The Count after this discovery acknowledges the existence of God, and confesses his murder of Gustavus Adolphus. He then kills himself, and so finds rest; but Ahasuerus wanders on—on!

THEODOR OELKERS has treated the subject in a novel, *Princess Mary of Oldenhoff, or the Wandering Jew*, (Leipzig, 1848). Oelkers adds a curse upon Ahasuerus: in order to reconcile Christ he must sacrifice what is dearest to him, but his sacrifices are always ineffectual. He takes from time to time a

wife, he has children; he survives each wife, slays his children; he is driven to do this by necessity, while conscious that the offerings will be in vain. He has the fearful gift of reading the future: foresees all that shall happen to himself and his beloved ones. In bitterness of heart he says: "Let men see in me how vain is their hope for divine love and mercy!" But at length he finds reason to hope for release at a very distant period. "I am only," he says, "condemned in Time: Eternity belongs to me, as it belongs to all when Time shall end. Then shall I be free to move about in endless regions, breathing the air of heaven; then the partial tyranny of Grace shall be dethroned; Justice will occupy the throne, sharing it with her sister, Love."

Oelkers thinks that before this time comes there will also appear a Wandering Moslem and a Wandering Christian.

LEVIN SCHÜCKING, too, brings our hero before us in an episode, full of imagination, called "The Three Suitors" which belongs to his novel *The Peasant Prince*, 1851. In the hotel of "The Three Moors," at Augsburg, during the twelve nights after Christmas in the year 1700, three strangers met together. One was a weary half-decayed Jew, with a long dirty gown, who next morning changes into a

indestructible, and by this very faith prepares the way of Nero's humiliation. Ahasuerus animates Nero to burn Rome, and swings the first torch; but he comes himself unharmed out of the flames, spared by the fire, to show Nero that there is still something on earth which to destroy is beyond his power; something like a phœnix rising out of ashes—the immortal humanity. For a moment Nero thinks himself equal to this new adversary. "I, too," he cries, "am indestructible: life in me is firmly anchored: nothing can ever change me! I am I! I cope with you: our combat will show if my intellectual indestructibility balances not thy bodily indestructibility!"

Ahasuerus accepts the combat with the certainty that the hour of death has come for Nero. It arrives in the curse of satiety and disgust which overcomes Nero. He has enjoyed the pleasures of earth, and Olympus; they have no more for him; only one thing further remains for him—Hades. By force of magic he summons the dead; his own victims start up before him, and, smitten with horror, he falls. Now, forsaken by his favourites and subjects, Nero escapes at the hand of the only one remaining—a devoted German—under the secret guidance of Ahasuerus, into the catacombs. He there finds a congregation of Christians, his mortal enemies. He

the world would say, *a man would have been unable to subdue it.*

The handsome Armenian prince takes her at her word and invites her to follow him one whole year: she promises it, and gives him as pledge of her word a ring. The two others obtain similar promises. At the end of the year she accompanies the Armenian. Suddenly she sees his youth disappear, a musty smell comes from him, and a third shadow walks at their side. "Who are you," she cries aghast. "I am Ahasuerus!" She tries to fly, but Ahasuerus holds her with an iron hand. In her despair she sells her soul to the third shadow (the Devil) who promises her deliverance. But first, she has to keep her word to the Rodensteiner. With him, the Wild Huntsman, she rides through the air, and from aloft beholds the depravity of human life. From what she has seen, and from the wild ride, her soul and body are tormented, she is unable to go any farther, and again implores deliverance of the Devil. Already the Flying Dutchman has come to claim fulfilment of her promise to him. The Devil agrees to save her if she will pledge him, besides her own, the soul of her child.

"No, never my child, never!" the tortured woman cries; she prefers another year's ride, over the sea.

'Take her, she longs still for a third trial," says the laughing Devil to the Dutchman; but he replies: 'The trial was great enough, she is released. Her force was superior to that of a man. *A man would not have spared the soul of his child more than he did his own.*" She wakes to find her child sleeping sweetly in its cradle; she finds also the three rings; but from the dream of a night her beautiful hair was grey.

JOSEPH VON ZEDLITZ, an Austrian poet, in his *Wanderings of Ahasuerus* (1844), transfers the end of the Jew's life to the Golden Age, when the reign of eternal Peace has begun. Ahasuerus has long been buried on Golgotha, when an angel awakes him, and bids him wander until Noah's white dove, the messenger of peace, comes back, bringing peace on earth and songs of joy, dispersing all wrath and hatred, uniting the nations under the sceptre of Humanity. Ahasuerus, lying in his grave, half-dreaming, sees history pass before his eyes; he awaits the time that shall come. Whenever he thinks this moment has arrived, he rises from his grave, and wanders about to see the world. It seems to him that the Golden Age is near, when the Roman Empire sinks and the star of Christendom rises; when the cherub's song of peace strikes his ear, he begins his pilgrimage. He expected to find peace, but he finds ruins, ashes, death. He meets Attila's

wild bands on his way. When Ahasuerus, 1300 years later, rises once more, he finds another Attila, who wants to bend a whole world under his sceptre. Terror-stricken, Ahasuerus cries: "Who can say Attila will not return a third time?" and returning to his grave, he asks: "Jehovah, how long must I still sleep?"

HANS CHRISTIAN ANDERSEN'S *Ahasuerus* is the angel of Doubt, who comes upon earth to live with men, whom he resembles, for like them he denies and doubts. He is born on earth at the same moment with Jesus, and now, as a human being, bears the name Ahasuerus. As a man he grows wiser and better, like his fellow-men, whose increasing perfection will, in many thousands of years, lead them to heaven. Then Ahasuerus too will return.

After this Prologue Ahasuerus is seen as a Jewish shoemaker; he is at the same time a favourite narrator of the stories of the Bible. Merry children, as well as serious Pharisees, come to his workshop, and listen to his words. He becomes conceited, and complains that he is only a shoemaker, and not allowed to sit among the Scribes. Among his auditors is young Veronica, who is enchanted with the new prophet from Nazareth, who had just made his appearance. Ahasuerus counts Jesus amongst the false prophets;

he also regards him as the cause of the death of his mother and sister, who had been slain by the agents of Herod. But when he hears Jesus preach in the desert, he changes his mind, and shares the admiration of Veronica. Now, he thinks, the days of splendour will come, according to the prophets, and the reign of David in all its magnificence. Judas, the friend of Ahasuerus, and the enthusiastic disciple of Jesus, is the first to doubt him. He thinks Jesus does not show enough energy in his proceedings, calls him a loiterer; at length decides to test whether he is really the Messias. If so, legions of angels will certainly assist him at his call; if not, he may perish. Judas betrays Jesus, in order to give him an opportunity to show his power—an idea suggested by Goethe. The hope of Judas is not realised. Jesus consents to be made a prisoner. "Man he was, and not Messiah!" says Ahasuerus, turning apostate; "how could I imagine that the son of a carpenter was a prophet? He feels the cold, suffers hunger, thirst, needs sleep."

After the usual scene on the way to Golgotha, a voice from above says to the disbelieving Ahasuerus: "Ahasuerus, Ahasuerus! thou art the type of mankind; thou disputest and deniest God himself. Ye are all alike; so thou mayest wander until we shall meet once again!"

It is not real Atheism, but a rigid Judaism that will not surrender to what the author deems the unfolding purposes of God, which appears in this Ahasuerus.

The first person whom Ahasuerus meets in his wanderings is Barabbas, who lives as an hermit in Lebanon, repenting his sins. He has already been mentioned in the poem as a profligate who only knows the god of his senses; but the crucifixion and the resurrection of Christ, which he has witnessed, have converted him. He receives his friend with the words, "Blessed be Jesus Christ." Ahasuerus answers with a curse. Full of wrath, not believing in the resurrection, he takes his leave of Barabbas. He trusts in the strength of Israel, but soon after he is told of Jerusalem's fall. He travels to Rome, where Domitian is persecuting the Christians. He rejoices when he sees the burning pyres and the Christian martyrs. He stands at the side of executioners who torture some Christians. Among these is Veronica. He cannot convert her, and tries therefore to slay her. He does not succeed in so saving her from torture, but is suspected and (apparently) killed by the executioners. Ahasuerus awakes to find beside him the dead Veronica, and many other bodies of martyred Christians. He starts forth in terror to flee the king-

dom of the Crucified, which he sees consisting only of "graves laden with the smell of Pestilence."

Having passed through distant parts of the world, Ahasuerus, at the end of three centuries, returns to Rome. He finds that the doctrine of Christ has conquered heathendom. The Emperor and his people are kneeling with Christ's name on their lips. "The spirit of Jehovah has left the earth; his people is lost in this world-chaos. The old is all dead; the new is vain and empty! Jehovah! my breast is Thy temple, the last in this ruined world!"

Ahasuerus passes the Alps. The Huns sweep by. He inspires Attila to attack Rome and crush Christendom. But he—he wanders on, farther on, to the region of the Northern Light. On his return he finds thick in the forests the symbols of Christ; he finds Christ now worshipped in Gaul, and in Rome the first Pope. Compelled now to believe in the power of the Christian faith, he yet persists in his belief that a still greater God will come, the true Messiah promised to Israel. The poet then describes the small communities of Jews, with their quiet and secret worship, still awaiting their Messiah. Some think he has come in the person of Mohammed, and to him Ahasuerus now goes. He advances with him to Jerusalem; there he is about to set the temple on fire, when Veronica

appears and prevents him. He journeys on. In Rome Charlemagne has been made emperor; the Jews have become slaves of the Christians. The hate of this inflexible believer in Jehovah increases. By a vast leap the poet brings Ahasuerus to Canossa, where, full of astonishment, he sees the emperor, barefooted and in tears, standing before the Vicar of Christ. Before such evidence of the Majesty of Christendom, Ahasuerus, too, stands with bended head. He cannot escape this new kingdom, for he is in the closed yard of the world which it fills. "The emperor stood for nights; my nights are millenniums!"

And now for the first time the idea rises in him that he is not only the Opposing Jew, but that he represents everything earthly in conflict with the divine.

The time of the Crusades comes. From all parts of the world the nations rush to Jerusalem, where once the altar of Jehovah stood. They are impelled by many selfish motives: no single thought or aim unites the warriors, and so they struggle in vain. Ahasuerus now learns to doubt the progress of mankind. In vain a master-builder beside his work instructs him that in the structure of the world God is the builder. "He does not die; each century is a stone block added to the rest: so mankind gradually ascends."

"But," Ahasuerus says, "often the work stands still." "It does," answers the stonemason, "but only to gather new strength." To this Ahasuerus answers that all the blood that has been shed in the Crusades was of no use to Europe; but the guildmaster replies that they formed a vast step in human progress, because they brought the different nations closer together, and brought "liberty" into the world. Many knights sold their estates, which passed into the hands of the commons; the supremacy of nobles was destroyed, new life sprang up in sciences and art. Then suddenly the cry of battle rings through the air, robber knights menace the peaceful citizens; the tocsin sounds; the workmen rush to the battlefield; the building stops. Full of mockery and derision at this new retrogradation in place of the vaunted human evolution, Ahasuerus walks on.

The errors of the age, the doings in the convents, the excesses of the Hussites, the mad demeanour of King Wenceslas, only increase Ahasuerus' disbelief in the progress of mankind. An angel leads him to Mayence, where Gutenberg's printing-press is seen. Ahasuerus does not believe in the importance of this invention. He also thinks Columbus a fool, but, nevertheless, follows him to the deep whirlpools of the sea, which he hopes will swallow him. But Columbus

is spared by the waves, he reaches land—the New World is discovered. There the god of the primeval forest complains like Ahasuerus, because he has been roused from his rest and deep silence and is dragged into the history of men. The all-pervading Spirit of the Universe addresses him, "Oh, might the discovery of this new hemisphere come also to thee, that thou mightst see the divine wisdom, take comfort, and know that in the future of Humanity there shall be One people, One mind, Unity and Reason!"

Amid the New World, and with this vision over it, Ahasuerus gains Belief. He now sees that "it was the ruin of Israel, once as rich a land as America, to reject the New, which comes from God." In human evolution the Old always denies the New: "God is born, crucified, and—lives." The wave of each century brings the accumulated treasures of the Past nearer to the shores of Perfection.

Then Ahasuerus stretches out his hands towards the endless Ocean, and in the chaos of his mind he begins to understand what *once* he was and what has become of him. In his own life he sees the progress of mankind, and so the wings grow that bring him back to Heaven. But the time has not yet come, only a day of Eternity has elapsed; and Andersen's Muse tells us in the last words of her song that "the

loved by Heaven. Rachel tells him that her Christ is a divine sea of love, into which they may together plunge and lose all memories and all longings. As Faust's contract with Mephistopheles holds the latter to bring him to an hour when he shall desire nothing beyond, an hour to which he shall say, "Stay, thou art fair!" so Ahasuerus is moved only by the pledge of his angel Rachel that no desire can arise beyond the divine Love. There is no water near; so there in the desert Ahasuerus kneels, and Rachel baptizes him with her tears.

As the world comes up before the seat of Judgment—cities, ages, continents, islands—curses fall on Ahasuerus. Rome, Babylon, Athens, the Highway, repeat the sentences of his doom in Jerusalem; the Mountain offers to be his Calvary; the Forest proffers him a Cross, and the Rivers would give him gall. But Christ speaks more kindly. Of all the universe Ahasuerus and Rachel now only remain. Christ offers now to give him his home in the East; but Ahasuerus says he does not desire it. "I ask life, not repose. Instead of the steps of my house of Calvary, I wish to ascend without pause the stairway of the Universe." "Art thou not weary from thy first journey?" "Thy hand, rising over me, has already dried my sweat. With thy benediction, I depart

with miracles; that he misleads poor fishermen to leave their work and homes; that he poisons the pure fountain of the Bible, deriving from it that he is the Son of Man. He, Ahasuerus, will unmask this dangerous impostor. So, when he is told by some children that a fine-looking man much like Jesus has sat down to take some rest at his door, he scornfully bids him move on, and not bring a curse upon his house by touching his threshold. Peter intervenes, but Ahasuerus laughs at him. Then Jesus rising, he answers, "Unhappy man! the feelings that so violently move thy heart come from a misled but believing mind. Sincere as is thy anger, even now thy heart is kind. If thou couldst only understand me, no one would shed his blood for me like thou. The time will come when thou shalt know me. Until the day when all the world shall have accepted Christianity thou shalt wander through the earth with thy people, spared by Death. Nations shall come and go, but ye shall remain until the day of the last trumpet."

Ahasuerus re-enters his house speechless. On the day of the Passover, Saul comes to him, and is told what happened. He declares Jesus one of those fanatics who rise everywhere and disappear like meteors; the streets of Rome are crowded with them. "Men," says Saul, "are bending under the burthen of

their sins and long for forgiveness, which they do not find in their Ancient Law. Love, the only thing that brings release, must be delivered from the chains of the old institutions." Unconsciously, Saul is already of the new belief, and is soon after formally converted. Peter and James try to convert Ahasuerus also, but they succeed only in engaging him to hear Saul, now Paul, who preaches in Athens of Christ's resurrection. Ahasuerus finds out that this doctrine is not in the Scriptures: Paul must be deceived. He returns to Jerusalem, in his old disbelief. Jerusalem is conquered, destroyed; Ahasuerus joins in the combat; at length all whom he has loved are buried, he leaves the ancient city in ruins: his wanderings begin.

We find him again, with other fugitive Jews, in a cavern, gathered about an old Rabbi. They mourn for Jerusalem, but their master reminds them of the Law; he exhorts them to adhere firmly to that—it is stronger than that of Christ's apostles, which is sealed only by a man, not by God. As Jewish apostles they go forth into the world. The war begins between Paganism, Christianity, and Judaism. Ahasuerus tries to win over the pagans, to bring back those that turn apostate. The wild movements and anomalies of the world gradually lead Ahasuerus to the hope of a kingdom not of this world. He is now seen longing

for Jesus; he flies the noisy world and arrives at the Lake of Tiberias. There Christ appears to him, and Ahasuerus implores forgiveness. He has already lost something of his rigid Jewish faith. When Constantine has become a Christian, and when Rome falls, he believes that his new idea will be realised: but no, straightway begin the disputes of Christian sects. Ahasuerus turns his back on the contending Gnostics, Simonians, Arians, and the rest, and comes to the desert, where he finds Anthony, the hermit. Anthony has delivered himself from the world and its controversies to find peace amid nature. They exchange their experiences and thoughts. Ahasuerus acknowledges that Christ's doctrine has spread a kingdom of love over the earth, but that his great work has been degraded to a mere fable. "I did not find the kingdom of God, but of men. Here I will rest until some Angel wakes me from my dream to begin once more my earthly pilgrimage." Anthony has the same faith; he will struggle on patiently and imitate the life that was so full of suffering and love. Henceforth the two live together in a long brotherhood.

This was the end of Heller's first edition. In the second he enlarged and transformed the entire poem. He separates the whole in three different wanderings. He calls the first, which we have already described,

Ahasuerus's Error of Faith; the second, *Picture of the Universe*; the third, *Humanity*. During his first pilgrimage, Ahasuerus moves still in the restricted horizon of a Pharisee, but he loses much of that in his intellectual intercourse with Anthony. In his second pilgrimage, although the whole scene of history lies open before him, he persists still in his hope of a coming Messias. At last he doubts that his hope will ever be realised; he frees himself from his rigid belief. The discovery of the New World, the invention of typography, and the Reformation, he now regards as contributing to a free evolution of mankind, leading to the only true religion: Humanity. Ahasuerus, like Faust, sees in this the high destiny of mankind. History unfolds itself before Man; he moves after it, observing, investigating, looking forward to the fulfilment of his desire. The movement of mankind over the Old World goes on; new gods replace the old; contrasts of all kinds meet together—nowhere is room for God's empire of peace. Mohammed, too, is not the right prophet. Under Charlemagne and Leo the empire of God's majesty on earth is founded, but this is not the real empire of God for which Ahasuerus looks. Besides, it does not prove to be everlasting. Priesthood, to which all nations blindly submit, degenerates; whilst in Germany, under the Saxon

emperors strong conventional worldly power arises. Then a new Messias seems to appear in Hildebrand, this monk so possessed of worldly wisdom; but his empire is only maintained by the strong reins of obedience, not by love. The Crusades do not satisfy Ahasuerus. New persons come before us, one forming a contrast to the other. Jehuda Levita, who praises the sublime inheritance of Adam against the "original sin" of Christendom; then the pious buffoon, Francis d'Assisi, contrasting with Tannhäuser, whom Ahasuerus meets in Rome, and whose longing for the fresh and natural world of his heathen land, amid the helpless ossification of the Christian priesthood, he can well understand; Dante, who tries at least to harmonise the contrasts in poetry; Rienzi, a political fool, who makes a step backwards into the old Roman time; Huss, who, a second saviour, a martyr of the old pure Christian doctrine, expires on the pyre.

Then Ahasuerus begins to doubt of the duration of God's empire. When he sees how Christ is always vanquished, and has now been crucified so often, a deep melancholy overcomes him; he longs for death, he is disgusted with seeing the world any longer. Then Faust appears to him, his congenial brother; Faust, the realist, who enjoys the life ar

and sits down at the feet of an image of Jesus there. Suddenly he perceives that the face looks upon him as if it were alive, with gentleness and compassion. Ahasuerus prays and is pardoned. Ahasuerus and Herodias are finally seen together, under a shelter, at peace, awaiting longed-for and approaching death.

In Ahasuerus, Sue represents the Workingman, an outcast from heaven under sentence of drudgery, finding at last release from oppression. Herodias is Woman, delivered at last from her political slavery.

So, in their widely differing spheres, have Quinet and Eugene Sue given a nineteenth-century refrain to the seventeenth century song:

> "Mais toujours le soleil se lève,
> Toujours, toujours.
> Tourne la terre où moi je cours,
> Toujours, toujours, toujours, toujours!"

M. Pierre Dupont has written a poetical version of our legend to accompany G. Doré's designs (published by Michel Lévy in 1856). But, as Champfleury says, the imaginatively created Jew of M. Doré, and the modernised narrative of M. Dupont, are very uninteresting compared with the rude pictures of the folk-books, and the quaint simplicity of the folk

ballads. The figure of the Wandering Jew which Kaulbach introduced into his picture of the siege of Jerusalem might, as a painting, be regarded as somewhat related to the New Ahasuerus of the poets, but it is a subject that still invites artistic treatment. And how suggestive of artistic effects the legend is may be judged by the next and last French work to be considered here: *La Mort du Juif-Errant. Par Edouard Grenier.*

This poem was first published, separately, in 1857, but afterwards included in its author's *Petits Poëmes*, of which the fourth edition is before me. It is a beautiful and pathetic poem, and treats the story subjectively. The poet describes himself as having escaped from the haunts of men, and built a little hermitage far away in the mountain solitudes. One evening, when he had been watching the fading splendours of sunset, the signs of a storm appeared. The labourers had hastened homeward, the herds sought their shelter, the birds their nests. He then beheld a solitary wayfarer moving on, and asked him to enter, informing him that, in the direction he was going, he could reach no house until morning, and pointing to the increasing menaces of the storm. The traveller turned upon him a burning eye and said, "Thou knowest not the wayfarer whose steps thou

wouldst stay. Why, detained by thy request, should I enter with thee thy hospitable door, if my name, when pronounced, must freeze thy welcome, and force me to repass thy threshold?" "Whatever thy name or lot, yet must this roof shelter thee this night." The Wanderer accepts. The poet draws a striking picture of his guest's strange and noble appearance. The traveller is shown a fountain where he may bathe; a repast is then spread before him. Afterwards the poet inquires the name and country of his guest, who turns pale, and with a sigh answers, "I am called Ahasuerus; I am the Wandering Jew." Seeing the poet's shudder, the Wanderer rises, thanks him for his hospitality, and says, "The cursed one blesses thee," then starts up to resume his journey. But the poet holds him. "It is not I who am charged with thy punishment." He forbids Ahasuerus to go out into the storm. The Wanderer says, "The beasts of the field and the birds of the air have their retreats from the rain and lightning, but the Proscribed One hath not where to lay his head." He heeds not the storm, but the voice which above it cries, "Still march! For thee alone neither repose nor death. March for ever! The justice of God has not had its full course." But when the poet has detained him, and as they sit together, this harsh voice for the first

time is not heard. He asks if the divine justice can have become weary? The poet bids him hope. The lamp is lit, and the poet entreats Ahasuerus to instruct his youth. He who has explored so many regions, seen so many peoples, traversed the earth—what a sublime destiny!—can tell much to him who, bound to one little spot, can only dream of such far realms, which he has longed to see. Ahasuerus tells him the earth is so small, his desire would soon be calmed, could he explore it. Each corner of nature offers the universe as in miniature. With the blue heaven above, and a soul within, he may unite the image of the real with the infinite dream. Earth, air, heaven, man, are everywhere the same. But, the poet says, life is so short; man does but begin to peruse the universe when death closes his eyes; while for him—the Wanderer—length of days have opened the treasures of knowledge; man, time, lands and ages, have no secrets for him. Ahasuerus bids the poet undeceive himself: each man receives in his mind what his forerunners have traced. "Step by step, day by day, century by century, along with humanity, I have wearily climbed the painful ladder on whose last rung God has placed thee." They have journeyed the same road, but he—the Wanderer—as a pioneer, has had to travel for ages on foot, over stones, the

course which the man of the present pas
chariot in a day.

In the third canto the Wanderer gives th
account of his wanderings. At first he ha
lieved in his doom; then, when he began t
plate the possibility of it, he entered into al
of dissipation to forget himself. Finally
mournful Valley of Jehoshaphat, he turned
pursuing phantom and faced it. "Is it the
terrible thing to live for ever? What hav
Death. What everybody is trying to do!
all aiming to live eternally as God in heaven
elated at his prospect; he will have glory, g
nations under his sceptre. Perhaps he wil
Messiah himself!

But the Wanderer's wife, passionately love
parts from his heart, withers of age, and die
young arms. The torture of that gradual
the one he loved is portrayed. His sons,
grow in years, dread him, hate him, try to pois
and then leave him in horror or remorse f
lands. Of his family one alone remains, a
son. But this last child's heart even grows
him. Its life sinks; its colour departs; its f
comes thin, corpse-like. O horror! he sees
him, in the dying child, the very face of Jesus,

he had insulted! The child dies on the day and hour of the anniversary of Christ's death.

After many wanderings Ahasuerus finds himself in the Colosseum at Rome, there seated in the moonlight. He had seen that great edifice built by Jews, stone by stone, while their own beloved Jerusalem fell to dust. As in the great Roman ruin he is meditating upon the vicissitudes he has witnessed, the *Angelus* sounds forth; the stars, the dew, all nature started in chorus, and said, "Repent!" He looks upon the crucifix amid that circle—triumphantly raised there, where he had seen Christians torn by lions. As he was looking upon that figure a well-remembered voice came to him from it, "Why fly from me? Thy sole refuge is in my love." Then he there knelt, crying, "O Christ! thou hast conquered me!" Then his first relief came in tears, and an ineffable peace descended in his heart. From that time he did not suffer as one disinherited; he even felt a delicious pain in his expiation; he lived, suffered and loved along with humanity. He now comprehended the enormity of his crime, which God had pursued so relentlessly: it was not his insult to Divinity, but his lese-humanity. He now felt that he might hope that his expiation would be complete, and in the last day he would find repose in the love of Christ.

In the fifth and last Canto the poet entreats the Wanderer to give him a description of Jesus personally, of whom he has so long dreamed—his look, manner, voice. When he has ended this appeal there is a knock at his door, and a stranger enters. Ahasuerus at once recognises him, and kneels, clasping his feet and bathing them with his tears. Jesus says to him, "Friend! weep no more! Since thy touched heart comprehends its sin and washes it away in tears; since the man outraged by thee as much as the God is now thy brother; since thy heart loves, I bring pardon, the reward of repentance. Be happy! Now, thou canst at last die."

In the morning a shepherd coming to the poet's hermitage found two forms lying prostrate, both apparently dead. The poet was slowly brought to life, but Ahasuerus was dead. On his face was a smile of celestial sweetness and calm felicity. On a bier made of larches the poet and the shepherd bore the dead body of the Wanderer to its place of rest. They bore it to the summit of the highest mountain. Beyond the trees they passed, beyond the bushes, and where the grass became scant. Into a cloud they entered, upward and onward bore him, till they came to the blue foot of a glacier. On a little couch of moss they laid the body while they dug a grave; as

they covered the Wanderer's form their last vision was of the smile still shining, or even happier, upon his face.

> "Ce vieux corps, fatigué par vingt siècles d'effort,
> Goûtait encore mieux le bienfait de la mort.
> Et c'est là qu'il repose, inconnu, solitaire,
> Perdu dans la nuée au-dessus de la terre !
> Nul monument funèbre attirant le regard,
> Ne révèle sa tombe au pas du montagnard.
> Le glacier qui défend cette gorge isolée
> En est le seul gardien et le seul mausolée.
> Nulle épouse, nul fils n'y sanglote sur lui,
> Et la seul rosée y vient pleurer la nuit.
> Nul mortel ne connaît sa demeure dernière,
> Personne, excepté moi, n'y versa de prière,
> Et seul l'aigle se pose à la cime où ses os
> Savourent dans mort un éternel repos.

It is interesting to contrast this peaceful end of Grenier's Ahasuerus with the invincible Wanderer of Shelley. Nevertheless, the Ahasuerus of this poem yields only to a tender appeal from Christ—himself the bound victim of an eternal curse. Another poem may yet be written which shall show Jesus not to have pronounced the doom upon the poor shoemaker, but to have known so much of Jahve's vindictive disposition as to foretell it, and ultimately coming to an understanding with Ahasuerus as the fellow-victim of an eternal curse. They might be shown buried to-

gether by the compassionate poet and shepherd where the foiled eagle of Jove, surviving from its feast on Prometheus, could not reach them, and the glacier-heart of deified power could freeze and crush them no more. This, for one of the two, would be a happier fate than survival in the satirical song still sung in France—

> "Jésus la bonté même
> Lui dit en soupirant,
> Tu marcheras toi-même
> Au moins pour trois milles ans,
> Tu finiras tes peines
> Au dernier jugement."

XVII.

THE NEW AHASUERUS IN ENGLAND.

THE old Ahasuerus had his day in England. While he was personally wandering about the world, however, in the guise of the pious pretender, pouring his cant into every long ear he could find, clever English writers began to utilise him. The earliest work (1640), *The Wandering Jew telling Fortunes to Englishmen*, was a fair satire upon some features of London in that time. The name of the Jew is Gad Ben-Arod Ben-Balaam Ben-Alimoth Ben-Baal Ben-Gog Ben-Magog. The next work that followed (1797) was an amusing drama. It is entitled *The Wandering Jew, or Love's Masquerade*, by Andrew Franklin. A surly old guardian, disgusted with the young beaux seeking his ward's hand, has vowed that he will give her to the most aged man to be found in England. The lover most favoured by the young lady conspires with

her to have an announcement of the presence of the Wandering Jew in London, and then presents himself in that disguise as Mr. Mathusalem. He is attended by his equally aged servant, Juba, in whose anachronisms the fun mainly consists. Juba, despite all efforts on Mr. Mathusalem's part to make him more reticent, is voluminous in his reminiscences; among other things, he tells about Romulus and Remus, and relates that, when he was at the baptism of the twins, their mother threw a basin of tea at him for saying that Remus was the prettier of the two.

In 1799 appeared the novel *St. Leon*, by William Godwin. It is not a very interesting work now, whatever it may have been at the time. The plot of it is, that a gentleman, who, through gambling, has sunk into poverty and plunged his family in distress, obtains from an uncanny old man the secret of recovering youth and obtaining money whenever he needs it. But he has vowed secrecy. He returns to his family, but is not recognised. He is cut off from the old sympathies. The novel speedily carries interest away from St. Leon to other persons, and ends without any account of his end, nor does it even carry St. Leon beyond the lives of his children. The romance might have been suggested by any traditional type of longevity, such as the Hindu Dnyaneshvar,

found in his tomb reading his Commentaries 300 years after apparent death; or Artesius, the Arabian alchemist, said to have, by his art, prolonged his life 1025 years, or Alkazwini, who also lived præternaturally long. The preface, however, contains an interesting citation, which gives its actual origin:—"The following passage from a work, said to be written by the late Dr. John Campbel, and entitled *Hermippus Redivivus*, suggested the first hint of the present performance: 'There happened in the year 1687 an odd accident at Venice, that made a very great stir then, and which I think deserves to be rescued from oblivion. The great freedom and ease with which all persons who make a good appearance live in that city is known sufficiently to all who are acquainted with it; such will not, therefore, be surprised that a stranger, who went by the name of Signor Gualdi, and who made a considerable figure there, was admitted into the best company, though nobody knew who or what he was. He remained at Venice for some months, and three things were remarked in his conduct. The first was, that he had a small collection of fine pictures, which he readily showed to anybody that desired it; the next, that he was perfectly versed in all arts and sciences, and spoke on every subject with such readiness and sagacity as

astonished all who heard him; and it was, in the third place, observed that he never wrote or received any letter, never desired any credit, or made use of bills of exchange; but paid for everything in ready money, and lived decently, though not in splendour.

"'This gentleman met one day at the coffee-house with a Venetian nobleman, who was an extraordinary good judge of pictures; he had heard of Signor Gualdi's collection, and in a very polite manner desired to see them, to which the other very readily consented. After the Venetian had viewed Signor Gualdi's collection, and expressed his satisfaction by telling him he had never seen a finer, considering the number of pieces of which it consisted—he cast his eye by chance over the chamber-door, where hung a picture of this stranger. The Venetian looked upon it, and then upon him. "This picture was drawn for you, sir," says he to Signor Gualdi, to which the other made no answer but by a low bow. "You look," continued the Venetian, "like a man of fifty, and yet I know this picture to be of the hand of Titian, who has been dead one hundred and thirty years. How is this possible?" "It is not easy," said Signor Gualdi gravely, "to know all things that are possible; but there is certainly no crime in my being like a picture drawn by Titian." The Venetian easily perceived, by

his manner of speaking, that he had given the stranger offence, and therefore took his leave. He could not forbear speaking of this in the evening to some of his friends, who resolved to satisfy themselves by looking upon the picture the next day. In order to have an opportunity of doing so, they went to the coffee-house about the time that Signor Gualdi was wont to come thither; and not meeting him, one of them, who had often conversed with him, went to his lodgings to inquire after him, when he heard that he had set out an hour before for Vienna. This affair made a great noise, and found a place in all the newspapers of that time.' "

It is probable that not only *St. Leon,* but the *Bassevilliana* of Vincenzo Monti had influence in exciting the English imagination with legends of this character. A translation of this Italian poem, by the Rev. Henry Boyd, was published in London in 1805. It is the story of a "Soul's Doom," founded on the murder of the French minister, Basseville, in Rome, near the end of the last century. The soul of Basseville is condemned to wander over the French provinces, and behold the desolations caused by the revolution and its retributions. The Spirit of the Abyss is forbidden to clutch Basseville. An angel says to the soul:

"Fear not; thou art not doomed to sip the wave
Of black Avernus, which who tastes, resigned
All hope of change, becomes the demon's slave;
But Heaven's high justice, nor in mercy blind,
Nor in security scrupulous to guage
Each blot, each wrinkle, of the human mind,
Has written on the adamantine page,
That thou no joys of paradise mayst know,
Till punished be of France the guilty rage."

Both *St. Leon* and "The Soul's Doom" might have been read by those comrades in distress, Shelley and Medwin, for whom seventy years ago Oxford Christianity, and homes inspired by it, had nothing better than wanderings about London under a curse. They took up the subject, Medwin says, when Shelley was fifteen. Of the poem, as it now stands, in the edition of Chatto and Windus, Shelley wrote but a few lines; but I think that amidst its rhapsodical rubbish a scholarly expression or illustration may here and there be found traceable to Shelley. There is evidence of Shelley's divining-rod in the allusions to some of the more significant legends concerning Ahasuerus which had attracted the attention of several German poets. There is in the opening some resemblance to the scene in Southey's *Curse of Kehama*. Where, in the latter, the young Hindu woman is brought forward to perish on the funeral-pyre, in Shelley's poem a sinning novice is dragged to

the "fatal shrine," from which she is rescued by the mysterious traveller. This horseman, hastening to Padua,

> "Wraps his mantle around his brow,
> As if to hide his woes."

In his tale, he says :

> "A burning cross illumed my brow,
> I hid it with a fillet grey."

This Cross enables him to command fiends. To Paulo, who has rescued her, Rosa the novice has given herself. Victorio, her lover, summons a witch-demon, and to her consigns his soul to obtain a philtre which will secure Rosa's love. But when he has administered it she dies.

Is the resemblance mentioned between this *Wandering Jew* and the *Curse of Kehama* accidental? The Medwin-Shelley poem was unable to reach the light for which it struggled in 1810. It was published in *Frazer's Magazine* in 1831. But soon after it was written, Shelley shows great eagerness to get Southey's poem, which had been announced, and twice writes to the bookseller, Stockdale, for it in December, 1810. In 1812, while at Keswick with his young wife, Shelley made the acquaintance of Southey,

if not before. In the poem of Southey, the young Indian casts down the idol before which the woman is about to be burned, which corresponds to the blow given to Christ by Ahasuerus. The curse is artificially modified, and may have been suggested by the sentence on Cain, "Behold now art thou cursed from the earth." The doom on the iconoclast is that on him shall fall neither the rain nor the sunshine, nor any of the influences of nature.

There would seem to be little doubt that *St. Leon* inspired Shelley's *St. Irvyne, the Rosicrucian*, or rather Ginotti, with his elixir of life, whose only "survival" is in Bulwer's *Zanoni*. The "gigantic Ginotti" dies through the wicked Wolfstein; but Shelley was particular in pointing out that "he did not die by Wolfstein's hand, but by the influence of that natural magic which, when the secret was imparted to the latter, destroyed him." The longevity is here not a doom. But once, as Shelley was walking through Lincoln's Inn Fields, he picked up a "dirty and torn" work, which contained Schubart's "Rhapsody" of Ahasuerus, elsewhere mentioned. Hogg was quite mistaken in affirming that Shelley's account was an invention. Full information on this point may be found in Rossetti's Shelley (vol. i. p. 434). The German poem had appeared in a magazine called the *German*

Museum, in 1802. The Wandering Jew thus became a type in Shelley's mind, and repeatedly appears in his works. In Alastor he uses the Wanderer as an illustration.

> "Oh that God,
> Profuse of poisons, would concede the chalice
> Which but one living man has drained, who now,
> Vessel of deathless wrath, a slave that feels
> No proud exemption in the blighting curse
> He bears, over the world wanders for ever,
> Lone as incarnate death!"

It is, however, in *Queen Mab* that we find the real form which arose before Shelley out of Schubart's small casket, fished up from the muddy ocean of London. Schubart's Ahasuerus whines and is pardoned. Shelley's Ahasuerus is a Titan, who prefers the sharp vulture-beak and the chain to any surrender to the Christian Jove. Believing as I do that Cain was originally a Semitic Prometheus,—as first of those who began removal of Jahve's curse on the earth by agriculture and working in metals,—I find it remarkable that Shelley, outcast from college and home in early youth because of his atheism, should recognise this feature in the distant successor of Cain.

> "A strange and woe-worn wight,
> Arose beside the battlements,
> And stood unmoving there:
> His inessential figure cast no shade

Upon the golden floor ;
His port and mien bore mark of many years,
And chronicles of untold ancientness
Were legible within his beamless eye :
Yet his cheek bore the mark of youth ;
Freshness and vigour knit his manly frame ;
The wisdom of old age was mingled there
With youth's primeval dauntlessness ;
And inexpressible woe,
Chastenéd by fearless resignation, gave
An awful grace to his all-speaking brow.

Spirit.—Is there a God?
Ahasuerus.—Is there a God !—ay, an Almighty God,
And vengeful as almighty ! Once his voice
Was heard on earth : earth shudder'd at the sound ;
The fiery-visaged firmament expressed
Abhorrence, and the grave of nature yawn'd,
To swallow all the dauntless and the good,
That dared to hurl defiance at his throne,
Girt as it was with power. None but slaves
Survived—cold-blooded slaves, who did the work
Of tyrannous Omnipotence ; whose souls
No honest indignation ever urged
To elevated daring, to one deed
Which gross and sensual self did not pollute.
These slaves built temples for the omnipotent fiend,
Gorgeous and vast : the costly altars smoked
With human blood, and hideous pæans rang,
Through all the long-drawn aisles.

* * * * *

"O Spirit ! centuries have set their seal,
On this heart of many wounds, and loaded brain,
Since the Incarnate came : humbly he came,
Veiling his horrible godhead
In the shape of man ; scorn'd by the world, his name unheard,

Save by the rabble of his native town,
Even as a parish demagogue. He led
The crowd ; he taught them justice, truth, and peace,
In semblance ; but he lit within their souls
The quenchless flame of zeal, and blest the sword
He brought on earth, to satiate with the blood
Of truth and freedom his malignant soul
At length his mortal frame was led to death.
I stood beside him : on the torturing cross
No pain assailed his unterrestrial sense ;
And yet he groaned. Indignantly I summ'd
The massacres and miseries which his name
Had sanction'd in my country, and I cried,
'Go ! go !' in mockery.
A smile of godlike malice reillumined
His fading lineaments,—'I go,' he cried,
'But thou shalt wander o'er the unquiet earth,
Eternally.'—The dampness of the grave,
Bathed my imperishable front. I fell,
And long lay tranced upon the charméd soil.
When I awoke hell burned within my brain,
Which stagger'd on its seat ; for all around
The mouldering relics of my kindred lay,
Even as the Almighty's ire arrested them,
And in their various attitudes of death,
My murder'd children's mute and eyeless skulls,
Glared ghastlily upon me.

But my soul,
From sight and sense of the polluting woe
Of tyranny, had long learn'd to prefer
Hell's freedom to the servitude of heaven.
Therefore I rose, and dauntlessly began
My lonely and unending pilgrimage,
Resolved to wage unweariable war
With my almighty tyrant, and to hurl

possession had not deserted the shattered mass of life.

"The youth approached the bough on which the breathing corpse was hung. As he approached, the serpent reluctantly unwreathed his glittering coils, and crept towards his dark and loathsome cave. The vulture, impatient of his meal, fled to the mountain, that re-echoed with his hoarse screams. The cedar-branches creaked with their agitating weight, faintly, as the dismal wind arose. All else was deadly silent.

"At length a voice issued from the mangled man. It rattled in hoarse murmurs from his throat and lungs —his words were the conclusion of some strange, mysterious soliloquy. They were broken and without apparent connection, completing wide intervals of inexpressible conceptions.

"'The great tyrant is baffled, even in success. Joy, joy to his tortured foe! Triumph to the worm which he tramples under his feet! Ha! his suicidal hand might dare as well abolish the mighty frame of things! Delight and exultation sit before the closed gates of death! I fear not to dwell beneath their black and ghastly shadow. Here thy power may not avail! Thou createst—'tis mine to ruin and destroy. I was thy slave—I am thy equal, and thy foe. Thousands

tremble before thy throne, who, at my voice, shall dare to pluck the golden crown from thy unholy head.' He ceased. The silence of noon swallowed up his words. Albedir clung tighter to the tree—he dared not for dismay remove his eyes. He remained mute in the perturbation of mute and creeping horror.

"'Albedir,' said the same voice—'Albedir, in the name of God, approach! He that suffered me to fall watches thee. The gentle and merciful spirits of sweet human love delight not in agony and horror. For pity's sake, approach! In the name of thy good God, approach, Albedir!' The tones were mild and clear as the responses of Æolian music. They floated to Albedir's ear like the warm breath of June that lingers in the lawny groves, subduing all to softness. Tears of tender affection started into his eyes."

The "Assassins" are something like Schiller's "Robbers," outlaws better than the laws that have branded them. In *Hellas*, Ahasuerus, though still appropriately responding to a summons from the Moslem Antichrist, is an impersonation of human thought as raised by long experience to a prophetic power. The idea is substantially the same as that which we have seen underlying the myths of Enoch and Teiresias, while it goes beyond them in its suggestion that knowledge, living over the ages past, and

imagination attaining to the farthest outcome of present tendencies, can make for the being of a day an eternal existence. Ahasuerus says to Mahmud :

> "All is contained in each.
> Dodona's forest to an acorn's cup
> Is that which has been, or will be, to that
> Which is—the absent to the present. Thought
> Alone, and its quick elements, Will, Passion,
> Reason, Imagination, cannot die ;
> They are, what that which they regard appears,
> The stuff whence mutability can weave
> All that it hath dominion o'er, worlds, worms,
> Empires, and superstitions."

With true Shelleyan felicity Hassan describes this Jew—

> "From his eye looks forth
> A life of unconsumed thought which pierces
> The present, and the past, and the to come . . .
> Some feign that he is Enoch."

In the year 1820 appeared the novel in four volumes, *Melmoth, the Wanderer*, by the Rev. Robert Charles Maturin, author also of *Bertram*, a respectable play, and several novels. Melmoth is a man who has sold himself to Satan for the advantage of a vast length of life, to which is added a power of passing instantaneously, at will, from place to place. The terms of his bond are that he may escape the final doom of his soul, which is to pay for these

advantages, provided he can find anyone willing to take the contract, with its benefits and penalty, off his hands. The author's purpose appears to be to show that no one would deliberately damn himself to all eternity for any temporal advantage; though this would seem to be rather "Irish," since his hero is just that man. However, the hero is an exception that proves the rule, for he goes about the world vainly tempting the poor and needy to take his place. Even a beautiful Indian maiden, who has fallen desperately in love with him, will not surrender her soul. Failing with all, he is carried off by the Devil. The supposed date of this catastrophe is toward the close of the eighteenth century.

The next work to be noticed at this point, and one which the perusal of Shelley may have suggested, is more distinctly based upon the legend of the Wandering Jew; this is the Rev. George Croly's *Salathiel: A Story of the Past, the Present, and the Future.* This novel, in three volumes, appeared anonymously in 1828. The spirit in which the legend is treated in this work will sufficiently appear by the following passages:

"Every sterner passion that disturbs our nature was to rule in successive tyranny over my soul.

"Fearfully was the decree fulfilled.

"In revenge for the fall of Jerusalem, I traversed the country to seek out an enemy of Rome. I found in the Northern snows a man of blood: I stirred up the soul of Alaric and led him to the sack of Rome.

"In revenge for the insults heaped upon the Jew by the dotards and dastards of the city of Constantine, I sought out an instrument of compendious ruin: I found him in the Arabian sands, and poured ambition into the soul of the enthusiast of Mecca.

"In revenge for the pollution of the ruins of the Temple, I roused the iron tribes of the West, and at the head of the Crusaders, expelled the Saracens. I fed full on revenge, and I felt the misery of revenge!

"A passion for the mysteries of nature seized me. I talked with the Alchemist. I wore away years in the perplexities of the schoolmen; and I felt the guilt and emptiness of unlawful knowledge.

"A passion for human fame seized me. A passion for gold! . . .

"I found a bold Genoese. I led him to discover the New World; with its metals I inundated the Old; and to my own misery added the misery of two hemispheres."

At length the eternal World-wanderer stands beside the newly discovered Printing Press; again he pays homage to Luther at his rise, and he attains a

faith in the progress of mankind. "At this hour I see the dawn of things to whose glory the glory of the Past is but a dream!"

Quite another Ahasuerus than Shelley's is represented in Wordsworth's "*Song of the Wandering Jew*," which somewhat resembles the idea of Müller, already quoted, as indeed both do the old saying, "The foxes have holes, the birds of the air have nests, but the Son of man hath not where to lay his head."

"Though the torrents from their fountains
Roar down many a craggy steep,
Yet they find among the mountains
Resting-places calm and deep.

"Clouds that love through air to hasten,
Ere the storm its fury stills,
Helmet-like themselves will fasten
On the heads of towering hills.

"What if through the frozen centre
Of the Alps the chamois bound,
Yet he has a home to enter
In some nook of chosen ground.

"If on windy days the raven
Gambol like a dancing skiff,
Not the less she loves her haven
In the bosom of the cliff.

"Though the sea-horse in the ocean
Own no dear domestic cave,
Yet he slumbers—by the motion
Rocked of many a gentle wave.

"The fleet ostrich, till day closes,
Vagrant over desert sands,
Brooding on her eggs reposes
When chill night that care demands.

"Day and night my toils redouble,
Never nearer to the goal;
Night and day, I feel the trouble
Of the Wanderer in my soul."

It would be interesting to know at just what period of his life, or in which of his two lives, Wordsworth wrote this "Song." Was it a memory of his dead self, the radical that fell in the French Revolution? Or did he write it when the sceptical wanderings of other minds around him had become to his peaceful soul, with no doom heavier than the liturgical round of Grasmere Church, as imaginary as the "seven whistlers on their nightly rounds," which his peasant-friend heard, while overhead were heard those "Gabriel's hounds" by ears that little knew they too were fabled of Jews doomed by the Crucified? All around Wordsworth in his home amid the Lakes were the real wanderers. Before nearly every fine mind living at the beginning of the last generation, this Ahasuerus had risen as a spiritual type. Seven times did Shelley evoke this form, and it was with him when he wandered unrecognised past Rydal Mount. Southey had known the meaning of it.

Byron had taken the side of Cain against him who in Paradise permitted "the Serpent to creep in," and seen in Prometheus, with "the wretched gift Eternity," the symbol of man's fate and force. De Quincey had made acquaintance with such doomed wanderers of rabbinical legend as "The Widow of Hebron." From afar the sighings of "L. E. L." were heard in fitful dreams of "The Undying One."

There came a terrible day when the children of the Revolution recognised the inexorable Mother of whom they were born. The old beliefs and ideas in which good and honest people had lived so comfortably were shrivelled up. It was not the half-way heresy of the earlier time which believed it was attaining a purer Christianity and a more glorious immortality. These children of the Revolution found the whole fabric of faith fallen to black ruins. The youth went off light-hearted to college: he came back heavy-hearted. Beside the old fireside he sat once more, with the dear faces around him and exile in his heart. He listened to the old Bible, and knelt; but his mind was far away, and had left him amid the innocent, a guilty, kneeling, assenting phantasm. Then there began this Age of Wandering; for the new mind could not yet get a new heart, and could only wander about like the night-

raven of folk-lore, that ever seeks the Holy Sepulchre for rest. Their voices may be heard in most of the literature of the last generation, pathetic as the appeal of deserted brides going about the street asking, "Saw ye my Beloved?"—the only answer being endless echoes of the question. Intellect seemed to them a curse. By it they were at one stroke deprived alike of faith in future and hope of present joys. Unfit for usual avocations, unable to enter pulpits and professions tainted with the discredited superstitions, how well could they understand the doom of every wanderer!

In the same year (1833) that Edgar Quinet—after ten years of wandering in the effort to find some point where he could catch a least ray of the old faith that made his early home so sweet, only to discover that his faith was gone out, not eclipsed—published his *Ahasuerus*, Carlyle also, after like wanderings, published his *Sartor Resartus*, with its story of the "Sorrows of Teufelsdröckh." It was in that same year, too, that Ralph Waldo Emerson, unable to rest even in his Unitarian pulpit, escaping from the clinging arms of his devoted congregation, came across the ocean to converse with Carlyle, Coleridge, and Wordsworth, and find if they could show him any light on the great problems. Coleridge had

taken refuge with opium and orthodoxy. Wordsworth entertained the young American Wanderer with lamentations over the excess of intellectual above moral culture in the modern world. But it was in the far solitude of Nithsdale that he hoped to find what he sought; for Carlyle had written an essay in which he spoke of standing amid night, yet seeing the faint signs of a new day-spring. "Here, straight uprose that lone wayfaring man," wrote Carlyle afterwards; but, alas, it was only to find at Craigenputtoch (Hawk Hill) one preyed upon by the same remorseless doubts. The personal hospitality was beautiful. But when the young American, just bereaved of his wife, sought some vision beyond the grave, there was no help for him. He asked Carlyle to what religious development those sentences about a new day-spring pointed? The answer was that he could not state that even to himself. Everyone, he said, must find out his own path, and walk in it.

When Emerson parted from Carlyle and returned to the New World, he found in its new life more than his vanished faith: to emancipate slaves, and human minds, and the moral genius of woman, and give the People their opportunity to build the New World into beauty and happiness—this he found was a religion with eternal vistas opening from it, hopes fairer than

his faded heaven, a providence better than the Syrian deity who had led the Old World into Red Seas, but never through them to any Promised Land. But Carlyle remained to wander to the last amid the wrecks of his lost worlds.

"Poor Teufelsdröckh! Flying with Hunger always parallel to him, and a whole Infernal Chase in his rear; so that the countenance of Hunger is comparatively a friend's! Thus must he, in the temper of ancient Cain, or of the modern Wandering Jew, save only that he feels himself not guilty and but suffering the pains of guilt—wend to and fro with aimless speed. Thus must he, over the whole surface of the earth (by footprints) write his *Sorrows of Teufelsdröckh;* even as the great Goethe, in passionate words, must write his *Sorrows of Werther*, before the spirit freed itself and he could become a Man. Vain, truly, is the hope of your swiftest runner to escape from his own shadow!"

Among all the Wanderers only one seemed to have found a new heart atwin with his new intellect—he alone loved and welcomed the new, and preferred the vulture-beak that tears Prometheus, the loneliness of Ahasuerus, to the favour of Jove, Jahve or Jesus. Shelley alone was heard singing his matin of the lark above ruins sadder than all the rest.

XVIII.

AHASUERUS VINCTUS.

HERE before me is a formidable array of large—one might almost say fat—volumes, which I have hardly known whether to assign to England or Germany, but conclude that they belong to both, and also to America, and to the night-side of Protestantism everywhere. They are entitled: *Chronicles, selected from the originals, of Cartaphilus, the Wandering Jew, embracing a period of nearly XIX. centuries. Now first revealed to and edited by David Hoffman, Hon. J. U. D. of Göttingen. In two series, each of three volumes. London: Thomas Bosworth*, 1853. This book contains a dedication, dated March 10, 1851, Upper Brook Street, Grosvenor Square, to the author's brother, Samuel Hoffman, Esq., of Baltimore, U. S. A. It contains also a dedication, dated September, 1852, Austin Friars, London, from Cartaphilus himself: "To the Children of the Dispersion — Jehovah's

favoured people during so many ages, Christ's scattered flock during so many more—these chronicles are affectionately inscribed," etc.

There is nothing in these volumes which bear upon the legendary Wandering Jew, except a tradition, incidentally mentioned, that in 1539 he visited Cornelius Agrippa, and was shown the face of Rebecca, whom he had loved fifteen centuries before, in a magic mirror. But the existence of such a book, embodying the vulgar Protestant superstitions about the "dispersion" and the gathering of the "chosen people;" the fact that so much labour can be expended on these notions by a man otherwise educated, the author apparently of several legal works, are phenomena to excite reflections. There is a good deal of suggestiveness, too, in the link between Austin Friars and Grosvenor Square. Cartaphilus, going his eternal round with cry of "O' clo'!" has finally, it would appear, discovered that he need only have his Judaism baptized to be one of "Christ's flock," pastured as richly in the fashionable Square.

But even more significant just now is the fact that Germany is ready to supply the hand that can write of the Jews as for ages "Jehovah's favoured people," and in the next moment be clenched to smite them as an accursed race. So much this union of Cartaphilus

and Austin Friars with the Hon. Mr. Hoffman and Grosvenor Square may mean for us, as we bid them farewell, finding nothing further in their voluminous sermons pertinent to our present inquiry or purpose.

Here are two pregnant facts. In various parts of the East Jews manifest a superstitious dread of a Christian's curse. On the other hand, for a long time there prevailed among Christians a belief that an oath taken in a Jewish synagogue was more binding and efficient than one taken elsewhere.* Add these two facts together, and their sum is in the following third fact: on Wednesday, April 13, 1881, a petition against the Jews was presented to the German Chancellor, in twenty-six volumes, 14,000 sheets, and with 255,000 signatures.

Every signature to that most shameful document which the nineteenth century has witnessed was set there by—Judaism itself. It was Israel that taught Christendom its black art of cursing. The Christian idea of a Chosen People of Christ, commissioned to make war upon other peoples as heathen, infidels, hosts of Antichrist, is a precise transcript of the Judaic idea of a Chosen People of Jahve, with commission to

* *Superstition and Force.* By Henry C. Lea, p. 26. Philadelphia, 1878.

put Gentiles to the edge of the sword. In the darkest ages, when holocausts of Jews were offered in sacrifice to a deified member of their race, the Christian might have addressed his victim with a paraphrase of Shylock's words, "If a Baalite disagreed with a Jew, what was his humility? Slaughter. If a Jew disagree with a Christian, what should his sufferance be by Jewish example? Why, slaughter. The intolerance your Testament teaches me I will execute, and it shall go hard but, with the aid of my Testament, I will better the instruction!"

When Moses Mendelssohn was asked, "When will the Jews become Christians?" he answered, "When the Christians cease to be Jews."

After Shakspeare had startled the world with a suspicion that the Jew is a man, it still required a hundred and fifty years, or thereabout, to awaken the further suspicion that a Jew might be a good, even a religious man. This revelation came through Lessing. When he was coming of age, Lessing recognised the injustice done to the Jews of Germany. Every Jew entering Berlin was compelled to pay toll at Brandenburg Gate. The meanest Christian might gain credit by insulting or assaulting a Jew. Frederick the Great could write, "Jesus was a Jew, yet we persecute the Jews," but his wide toleration left that people unpro-

tected. Lessing wrote an early drama, *Die Juden*, which touched gently on the matter. In it a wealthy Jew of high character saves the life of a Christian baron and his daughter. The baron desires the youth to marry his daughter, but finding to what race and religion he belongs, that, of course, is impossible. So the drama ends. Why impossible? The answer to that question had to be postponed. There are some evils in this world which are like the birth-mark in Nathaniel Hawthorne's story: the chemist succeeded in extracting the birth-mark from his wife's face, but the wife lay dead. When the mark of the cross disappears from the Wanderer's brow, so that the Christian who has branded him shall no longer say as he passes, "He is a Jew," nor for that part from his daughter's lover, Christianity will be dead. The flower of Lessing's great heart and mind was *Nathan the Wise*. The apologue of "The Three Rings," in which the Jew, the Moslem, the Christian Templar, raised above their bigotry by mutual human service are seen in a tableau of charity, shone like the star of a new religion over Germany. It is the "Ideal of Religious Liberty," said Schwartz, Historian of Modern Theology at Halle; "Truly can Deity be said to pervade every line of Nathan," said Kuno Fischer, of Jena University; while in it Strauss sees

one advancing the "Kingdom of God on earth."* Yet even Lessing was still not equal to the idea of having the Jewess marry the Christian. Just as we are listening to hear the marriage-bells ring out for the lovers, lo, they turn out to be brother and sister! So, the religious equality having been proclaimed a hundred and fifty years after Shakspeare had proclaimed the human equality, Lessing leaves it to a like time to establish the social equality of Jew and Christian.

But was this line drawn altogether by the Christian? Lessing's friendship with Moses Mendelssohn had taught him otherwise. When Michaelis, the theologian, read his early play, "The Jews," he wrote a criticism in which he expressed a doubt whether an oppressed and despised race could produce such a man as the hero. Mendelssohn replied, and Lessing, enclosing this reply to Michaelis, wrote concerning its author: "He really is a Jew, a man of five-and-twenty, who, without any instruction, has acquired great attainments in languages, in mathematics, in philosophy, in poetry. I foresee in him an honour to our nation, if he is allowed to come to maturity by his co-religionists, who have always displayed an unfortunate

* *Nathan the Wise.* From the German, with an introduction, by R. Willis, M.D. London: Williams and Norgate.

spirit of persecution towards men like him." The confirmation of this apprehension on the part of the Jews' earliest champion in Germany may be found in the enthusiasm which the next eminent Mendelssohn put into his oratorio of "St. Paul."

Goethe tells us that he had intended to bring his Wandering Jew to a meeting with Spinoza. The great German had met with two illustrations of the legend he did deal with, of Faust carried off by demons. One was in the case of Lessing, who, for his defence of Jews and his attack on historic Christianity, had been piously impaled by a rumour that Satan had appeared at his death-bed. The other was in a tract he picked up in which Spinoza was denounced as an infidel, and upon which was a picture of the noble man, giving him diabolical features. But, alas! Spinoza had been more a martyr among his own people than among Christians. Ahasuerus with the red cross on his brow would have found Spinoza also a lonely wanderer, outcast from his people, but not under any Christian doom.

Were Goethe alive, he would find Spinoza still in Europe, and still a lonely wanderer amid the scowling hatred of both Jew and Christian. He would find in England, certainly, a steady tendency of synagogue-Judaism to find its ally and support in the Chris-

tianity which alone represents its ancient superstition and bigotry. It is the orthodox Jew who on Saturday sets the model of a Sabbath for the Christian to copy on Sunday. When the parliamentary oath—half Romish, half Jewish—is questioned, Jew and Christian stand side by side in its defence, and together seek to impose upon Englishmen of the nineteenth century the theological test of belief in an oath-bound and oath-guaranteeing deity in which no educated man can possibly believe. The orthodox male Jew thanks Jahve in his liturgy that he was not made a woman; and the male Christian responds by excluding women from political rights. While in Germany the Christian persecutes the Jew as Antichrist, in England the Jew persecutes the Antichristian as Armillus. The Jew recognises a believer in the Trinity as a true theist, and the Christian accepts the Jewish worshipper of Jahve as a theist; and they make common cause against the disbeliever in both as a "miscreant," an "atheist." Some influential Jews recently made an effort to "Boycott" the *Jewish World* newspaper for its criticisms on Christianity. From another "Jewish" quarter there came a sharp cry of distress and anger because a scholar attempted to prove that Jesus was not of the Jewish race!

It is a significant fact that the man of whom the

Jews of recent times have been proudest, the statesman whom every Israelite in Europe was glad to aid with his information and his wealth, was a Jew whose circumcision had been subordinated to Christian baptism. This combination of auspices—the heart of an ancient Jew with the political advantages of a Christian—made Lord Beaconsfield a symbolical figure. It is only in its Christianised form that Judaism can ever behold even a partial fulfilment of its ancient dreams of worldly power. The theocracy of Jahve is henceforth dependent for every shred of its authority upon the golden sceptre of Christ.

Christ is for the present a monarch—in England the last surviving sovereign whose rule is at all theocratic. The Jews, as we have seen, were really saved from extermination by powerful rulers who only hungered for their money while the mob thirsted for their blood. Fear of the populace was part of the heritage of the Jew, transmitted by heredity. However bravely the modern Jew—at least up to this generation—might begin with the radicalism of his prophets, he was pretty sure to develop into a supporter of strong government; and there has hitherto, in most countries, been always sufficient Christian intolerance to enable that evolution to pass its embryonic phases without arrest. Heine begins with revolutionism and atheism;

ends with worshipping Napoleon I. (whom he sees protecting Jews along the Rhine), and God (of whose existence he was convinced by the sense of smell while mingling with the atheistical *ouvriers* in their Paris clubs). Benjamin Disraeli begins with poetical eulogy of regicide, and ends with turning a queen into an empress. So far as this ancient reactionism can survive into the immediate future, it must necessarily be the ally of Christianity. The English Jews who paid so large a sum to bring back Charles II. to his throne, were represented by those who gathered to the support of the Christian Lord Beaconsfield.

Lord Beaconsfield was for the Jews a triumph for their race, but a humiliation for their religion. They must needs find their leader in a family of apostates! But the orthodox Jews knew well that this humiliation was more than compensated to them in the new resource which their christened leader opened for them against their party of progress. Disraeli the Elder had fled from the dry bones of Judaism to find intellectual freedom. Disraeli the Younger, sent by his father into the Christian Church, found there the dry bones all turned into armed men.

Isaac Disraeli made an earnest effort to be at once a man of letters and a member of the synagogue. When his effort had proved vain, and he must

follow Spinoza and Mendelssohn on the path of exile, he wrote to the wardens of Bevis Marks synagogue: "Many of your members are already lost; many you are losing! Even those whose tempers and feelings would still cling to you are gradually seceding. But against all this you are perpetually pleading your existing laws, which you would enforce on all the brethren alike. It is of these obsolete laws so many complain. They were adapted by fugitives to their peculiar situation, quite distinct from their own, and as foreign to us as the language in which they were written. For the new circumstances which have arisen you are without laws."

Soon after his separation from the synagogue he wrote his work *The Genius of Judaism.* In it is the following passage: "The religious Judaism of the Theocracy degenerated into Rabbinical Judaism by fabulous traditions and enslaving customs. Dictators of the human intellect, the Rabbins, like their successors, the papal Christians, attempted to raise a spurious Theocracy of their own. A race of dreaming schoolmen contrived to place an avowed collection of mere human decisions among the hallowed verities and the duties of devotion, to graft opinions of men on the scion of divine institutions; nay, even to prefer the gloss in direct opposition to the divine precept,

the salvation of the world; that no one has ever been permitted to write under the inspiration of the Holy Ghost but a Jew; that all Christians acknowledge that the only medium of communication between themselves and God is the Jewish race; that the Mother of God was a Jewess; that, indeed, is a *reductio ad absurdum*, which cannot be unwelcome to the age of common sense. But every nail he thus drove into the coffin of Christianity was one which had pierced the hands and feet of humanity from Canaan to Calvary, and from Calvary to Smithfield.

The devotion of Lord Beaconsfield to the Jewish people was a fearful retribution on the synagogue that drove out his father. His kiss was as fatal as it was sincere. He taught the Jewish youth that the path to power and glory, not merely for themselves but for their race, lay in the direction of Christianity. His spirit may yet survive as the Moses of a journey through the baptismal sea to the Promised Land. He confirmed them in every error—in all their race-egoism, in all their indifference to the progressive enlightenment of the world, and gave their bigotry a new lease of life by a Christian confirmation. The most eloquent passage he ever wrote is in *Tancred*, in the "Feast of Tabernacles," which the *Jewish World*, in quoting it after his death, said might

have been uttered by a *Chasid* in a moment of inspiration: "The vineyards of Israel have ceased to exist, but the eternal law enjoins the children of Israel still to celebrate the vintage. A race that persist in celebrating their vintage, although they have no fruits to gather, will regain their vineyards. What sublime inexorability in the law! But what indomitable spirit in the people! It is easy for the happier Sephardim, the Hebrews who have never quitted the sunny regions that are laved by the Midland Ocean; it is easy for them, though they have lost their heritage, to sympathise in their beautiful Asian cities or in their Moorish and Arabian gardens, with the graceful rites that are, at least, an homage to a benignant nature. But picture to yourself the child of Israel in the dingy suburb or the squalid quarter of some bleak northern town, where there is never a sun that can at any rate ripen grapes. Yet he must celebrate the vintage of purple Palestine! The law has told him, though a denizen in an icy clime, that he must dwell for seven days in a bower, and that he must build it of the boughs of thick trees; and the Rabbins have told him that these thick trees are the palm, the myrtle, and the weeping willow. Even Sarmatia may furnish a weeping willow. The law has told him that he must pluck

the fruit of goodly trees, and the Rabbins have explained that goodly fruit on this occasion is confined to the citron. Perhaps, in his despair, he is obliged to fly to the candied delicacies of the grocer. His mercantile connections will enable him, often at considerable cost, to procure some palm-leaves from Canaan, which he may wave in his synagogue while he exclaims, as the crowd did when the divine descendant of David entered Jerusalem, 'Hosannah in the highest!' There is something profoundly interesting in this devoted observance of Oriental customs in the heart of our Saxon and Sclavonian cities; in these descendants of the Bedoueens, who conquered Canaan more than three thousand years ago, still celebrating that success which secured their forefathers, for the first time, grapes and wine. Conceive a being born and bred in the Judenstrasse of Hamburg or Frankfort, or rather in the purlieus of our Houndsditch or Minories, born to hereditary insult, without any education, apparently without a circumstance that can develop the slightest taste, or cherish the least sentiment for the beautiful, living amid fogs and filth, never treated with kindness, seldom with justice, occupied with the meanest, if not the vilest, toil—bargaining for frippery, speculating in usury, existing for ever under the concurrent

influence of degrading causes which would have worn out, long ago, any race that was not of the unmixed blood of Caucasus, and did not adhere to the law of Moses; conceive such a being, an object to you of prejudice, dislike, disgust, perhaps hatred. The season arrives, and the mind and heart of that being are filled with images and passions that have been ranked in all ages among the most beautiful and the most genial of human experience; filled with a subject the most vivid, the most graceful, the most joyous, and the most exuberant; a subject which has inspired poets, and which has made gods—the harvest of the grape in the native regions of the vine. He rises in the morning, goes early to some Whitechapel market, purchases some willow-boughs for which he has previously given a commission, and which are brought, probably, from one of the neighbouring rivers of Essex, hastens home, cleans out the yard of his miserable tenement, builds his bower, decks it, even profusely, with the finest flowers and fruits he can procure, the myrtle and the citron never forgotten, and hangs its roof with variegated lamps. After the service of his synagogue, he sups late with his wife and his children in the open air, as if he were in the pleasant villages of Galilee, beneath its sweet and starry sky."

"What sublime inexorability in the law!" Nay, what binding, paralysing, mercilessness in the self-imposed law that holds the eyes of a race for ever at the back of its head instead of in the forehead! In the great and grievous error of those words is repeated once more the doom of the Wandering Race. In them Jesus says again to Ahasuerus, "As thou hast refused to go out in the general vineyard of humanity, to toil and gather with the true and earnest of all races and religions, be this thy sentence: Keep thy small province of mouldered faith; go on, and on, and for ever, celebrating vineyards that do not exist, pressing dead grapes that yield no wine, waving dead palm-leaves before a Messiah that can never arrive, bound in thine everlasting Houndsditch round by dreams of myrtle-bowers in a barbarian paradise long ago turned to a Valley of Jehoshaphat!"

Lord Beaconsfield also dealt his blow to Spinoza. He defended the rights of the Jews in Parliament on the ground that they were all Jews, all believers in Moses and the Prophets; and that the alternative of this was belief in Hume and Gibbon. The day of his burial was solemnised by the party he had led with an effort to drive out of Parliament an Englishman who preferred Hume and Gibbon to Moses and the Prophets.

This is the doom of Judaism. This is Ahasuerus bound. There is a nobility in the Ahasuerus that Shelley evokes in *Queen Mab*, a Semitic Prometheus bound for ever on Time and its desolations, as a rock, with bigotry and intolerance feeding vulture-like upon his heart because he will not bend to tyrannical Jove, either in the form of Jahve or of Jesus; suffering as the friend of a Humanity also groaning beneath a celestial despotism, but cringing as he will not. But there is nothing Promethean in the mere preference for the chains of one tyrant over those of another. There is nothing noble in a sect accepting its rock and vulture through servility to a deity of whose indifference or impotence or non-existence the history of his worshippers is a sufficient proof. There is no majesty in martyrdom unless it is endured for the deliverance and welfare of all mankind. There was a time when the Jews suffered nobly; they stood almost alone in preserving the protest of the human mind against priestly impostures, which could not be maintained by the thinking Greeks and Romans—who no doubt knew the facts as well as Lucian and Celsus—against imperial decrees. But that time passed when thought became free. The emancipation of the Jews politically brought to their side Herakles—a human-hearted deliverer—who cut their outward cords. Judaism,

remaining on its Caucasus, apart from the evolution of humanity, is bound only by inward chains. Its doom, in free countries, comes only from within.

It is forbidden that any man or race shall find strength and happiness in isolation, and this race is withheld by its traditional system and its dogmas from co-operation with mankind in its nobler aims and tendencies. Their fundamental error is to regard the God of Israel as different from the Gods of other people. Upon that rests the wild superstition that the Jews, in some sense or other, are "a chosen people" or "a peculiar people." It is the doctrine alike of Christianity and Judaism; but as in the dreary past it has been the dogma most fatal to the Jews—their accepted supernatural eminence logically leading to their supernatural doom—it must be equally fatal in their future of freedom, in an intellectual sense. So long as they are marked off in the human world in this way they will not find rest; for that can be found only when their genius—earning such wreaths as adorn the brow of Spinoza and Heine, or those which came from every capital to lie on the grave of Offenbach—is identified with the general work and play of the world, and their religious aims such as are common to all who acknowledge allegiance to reason and pursue the equal welfare of mankind.

XIX.

AHASUERUS DELIVERED.

THERE are certain races of mankind whose history or whose character has made them the tests of civilisation. In one direction the negro has been such. In the development of English self-government, on both sides of the Atlantic, there came a time when its fine theories of liberty were put to the test. In America the poor ignorant negro knelt chained before the genius of the Republic. His slavery represented many millions of money, his freedom must cost many thousands of lives; but Justice said, "There is that lowly man—helpless, of alien race from you, too poor to pay you anything: if you can do justice to him, can make him a citizen, the world will know that you are really a republic."

In another direction the Jewish race has been the rest and register of civilisation. It was the one visible embodiment of Antichrist in Christendom. While

missionaries were going through the world to co
the world, the Jew also went through the wo
moral, religious, learned—a compulsory wandere
missionary, in whose scars might always be rea
spirit of the Church he opposed, and the meanin
vicarious atonement, whose corollary was the u
ing crucifixion of a race for the offence of three o
of their ancestors. This Wandering Jew knock
the doors of law-courts. "Who art thou?" sai
judges. "I am Antichrist." "Come in and be b
said they. He came in and was burnt. But
rising from his ashes, the Wanderer marched
Again, after some centuries, he knocked at the
marked Justice. "Who art thou?" asked the ju
"I am Antichrist," he said. "Stay out an
mobbed," said they. And so he wandered un
reached the century when England opened the
and said, "Enter and receive thy right." Even
Jeffrey, in the time of George I., would not acce
old law which disabled a Jew from prosecuti
Christian. "Pay him his money," he cried t
defendant. "His action is not against a Chri
you are more a Jew than he is!" At many doo
unconquerable Antichrist had to knock in this
slowly, against frantic attempts to bar them
swung open, one after the other; and it was

that English justice, confronting what Christendom called a devil, was ultimately equal to giving that devil his due—in society, in the law-court, in the Parliament.

The English have managed to hold superstition more in order in their smaller territory than it is held in Eastern Europe, yet they must not take for their own race all the credit for the equality that has been accorded the Jew in England. The credit is mainly due to himself. Some forty years ago, when wild stories reached Great Britain from Damascus and Rhodes of how Jews were suffering horrible outrages on account of absurd accusations—such as sacrificing Christian priests and children—the entire English community joined to support Sir Moses Montefiore in his mission to repress that fanaticism. But when England had sent Sir Moses on his noble mission, it turned to consider its own relation to the Jews, and found on its statute-book laws which still bore witness of the ages when Jewish blood had mingled with Christian sacrifices. The laws were even then—forty years ago—not all obsolete. But some of them were, and others have since become so, largely through the fact that the Jews had made themselves useful to the country.

Just now England is again called to look abroad

though nearer home, and consider the outbreak of fanaticism in Germany.

Dr. Carl Vogt, the naturalist, recently expressed his belief that the present persecution of Jews in Germany is a recurrence of ancient Teutonic barbarism. He explains Judenhetze scientifically, on the principles of Atavism. Every now and then there must be a recrudescence of suppressed barbarism. Those who have read, in *A Tramp Abroad*, those accounts of the duels witnessed by imperturbable Mark Twain in that country—duels in which students cut and slash each other in a friendly way, in the intervals of drinking beer together, and flaunt their facial gashes upon the street with pride, will suspect that the barbarism in coming back had not far to travel. Nevertheless, we must remember that Germany has not yet completed that revolution which shall bring the people under the influence of their best heads ; its great science, art, and literature are still carried on as it were in cloisters. The throne of Germany's noble Reason is usurped by heartless pretenders in politics and hypocrites in religion. Barbarossa will awake presently, and when he comes forth from his cave it will not be in the guise of Emperor William or Prince Bismarck, nor yet as the priest-ridden Jew-hater, but as a cultured and

courageous People, with their feet alike on titled despotism and parochial barbarism.

As, however, in the outrages on Jews at Damascus and Rhodes, in the last generation, England caught a glimpse, as in a mirror, of certain features from her own hideous past still surviving in her laws, so one can hardly turn from the Judenhetze of Germany without a consciousness that there are still certain scandals in the attitude of English Christianity towards the Jews. The chief scandal is that there should be an organised society for converting them—as if they were savages.

The existence of such a society in London will one day be quoted to show how much pious preadamitism survived amid our telegraphs and telephones. It is not civilised for men to suppose that a good Jew is inferior to a good Christian. It is scandal that the learned clergy should permit the people to suppose that Christian churches and sects have any moral or spiritual advantage over those who attend the synagogue. How many mothers who teach their children the precepts of the Sermon on the Mount, or rehearse to them the parables of the New Testament, pity the children of Jewish mothers as knowing nothing of those beautiful and tender sayings? How many of them even realise that the Golden Rule is in

the Pentateuch; and that every Jewish child learns those sweet sayings and parables where Jesus learned them—at his Jewish mother's knee?

It is a great misfortune that religious liberalism, in its revolt from the primitive Judaism which Protestantism and Puritanism restored, and which survives now chiefly among Sabbatarian and dogmatic Christians, has kept before the world only that ancient Jahvism under which Canaanites were exterminated. It has thus indirectly fostered the fallacy which regards as Judaism much that even strict Jews have long ago outgrown. The Jews themselves, however, as we have seen, are largely to blame for the persistence of this vulgar delusion; indeed, even many of their liberal thinkers have obstinately preserved their new wine in ceremonial bottles, with the ancient labels, and helped to convey the popular impression that their religion is unchanged. But it *is* changed. Even the strictest Jews are to-day less Sabbatarian, and more emancipated from the barbarism of sacrificial superstitions, than Christians. When Moses Mendelssohn said that the Jews would become Christians "when the Christians cease to be Jews," he no doubt recognised that Christians are preserving as dogma the Judaism which Jews keep as a shell, but inwardly have outgrown; and that a conversion of the Jews to

Christianity would really carry them back to Levitical beliefs long replaced by the modern ideas prevailing inside the hereditary and patriotic walls from which they fear to venture.

Spinoza was as representative a Jew as ever lived, and never more than when the synagogue disowned him. The history of his race for a thousand years had been to him an instruction in fidelity and independence. That there is a vigorous Left among the Jews is apparent in every direction; not only in Jewish scholarship, which is assisting in the work of detaching from their Bible and other sacred books a Hebrew Mythology, but also in the political and social influence of Jews. The outbreak of Judenhetze in Germany is a bad enough symptom for the Teutons, but a hopeful sign for the Jews. Socially they have excited jealousy by the extent to which, having become men and women of the world, they are able to support that character by their wealth. Politically, they would appear to have so completely entered into those liberal and popular movements which they so long eschewed, that the Imperial Power is under the necessity of reminding them that, as in the past they suffered from the mob, and were protected by princes, so it may be again. The retention of the Rev. Mr. Stoecker as Court Chaplain, while he is leading this agitation so

unscrupulously, is a confession that the anti-Semitic movement has the encouragement of the Emperor and his Chancellor. To awaken Teutonic jealousy of Jewish wealth, just beginning to be displayed in the enjoyment of Gentile luxuries; to arouse Christian fanaticism against the growing freethought of a race ceasing to expect any Messiah: such are the obvious methods by which the German Government hope to separate Jewish means and radicalism from the masses, and drive Jews to their ancient refuge—the strong central power always purchasable by money and servility. What success will crown this imperial effort remains to be seen. But that there should be a necessity for it is a confirmation of what the late Lord Beaconsfield asserted, and such good judges as Herr Eydmann and Karl Blind attest, that the Jews are very extensively concerned in popular movements on the Continent.

That these liberal tendencies might be expected among the Jews generally when and where they feel assured of freedom and security, is suggested by the history of their race in America. It is certain that the leading Rabbins of that country would be regarded as perilously latitudinarian by their strict co-religionists of Europe. It is a significant unique fact that the high family of Adlers has produced a

Recent events in Germany and Russia may even prolong this timidity; the ferocious reply to their attempt to mingle in the society and politics of the world may set back for a little their liberation. But the free heart and mind of Europe is with them, and will be felt not only in England but on the Continent. The unbinding of Ahasuerus is part of the civilised revolution which can never really go backward.

Shakspeare was the first to show the Jew to be a man. Lessing was the first to show that a Jew might be as good a man as a Christian, the indispensability of Christ to excellence being quite ignored. Thus the seventeenth century had its gospel for the Jew, and the eighteenth century had its gospel. But in essence the gospel according to Lessing was not so high as that of the master at whose feet he learned it. Shakspeare had raised up the standard of Manhood, and in its light Judaism and Christianism are seen to be comparatively small things, and their contentious tempers proof that they are no longer religious in any pure sense. Lessing, even in his famous apologue of the Three Rings which a father gave to his equally beloved sons—similitudes of the Jewish, Moslem and Christian religions—makes the wise judge end the dispute as to which is the true ring by consecrating all three. The true ring, which the fond father had

caused to be copied in two others, so that neither son might be disappointed, had the power to draw the love of all on its owner. But it also carried the right to sovereignty; and this advantage so overbore the former virtue that each son, with his ring, was found to love himself alone. The Judge advises them to be each content with his ring:

> "Let each of you comport him in such wise
> As love unbribed commands; let each resolve
> To show the world that in the ring he wears
> He holds the prize, its virtues being shown
> To Man in acts of justice, meekness, mercy,
> To God in thoughts of love and heartfelt trust."

But the nineteenth century should transmit to the twentieth a nobler gospel for Jew, Moslem, and Christian than that. Let each of them see that his ring is a survival from the ancient chain that fettered him to his several rock of superstition; that so long as he holds faith in it, no transmutation of it into gold, no decoration with opal, can make it other than a talisman to bind him, and isolate him from the real work of creating a Man able to be the providence of this world. Let the rings, not only of Israel, but of Christianity, and of all sects, be thrown into the flames of human love, that there may be formed a coronet for the Mother whose patient all-loving face poetry and science are revealing. "In this principle," said

Clifford, of the evolution of organic from inorganic things, "we must recognise the mother of life, and especially of human life, powerful enough to subdue the elements, and yet always working gently against them; biding her time in the whole expanse of heaven, to make the highest cosmos out of inorganic chaos; the actor, not of all the actions of living things, but only of the good actions; for a bad action is one by which the organism tends to be less organic, and acts for a time as if inorganic. To this mother of life, personifying herself in the good works of humanity, it seems to me we may fitly address a splendid hymn of Mr. Swinburne's:

"Mother of man's time-travelling generations,
Breath of his nostrils, heart-blood of his heart,
God above all Gods worshipped of all nations,
Light above light, law beyond law, thou art.

"Thy face is as a sword smiting in sunder
Shadows and chains and dreams and iron things;
The sea is dumb before thy face, the thunder
Silent, the skies are narrower than thy wings.

* * * * *

"All old grey histories hiding thy clear features,
O secret spirit and sovereign, all men's tales,
Creeds woven of men thy children and thy creatures,
They have woven for vestures of thee and for veils.

"Thine hands, without election or exemption,
Feed all men fainting from false peace or strife,
O thou, the resurrection and redemption,
The godhead, and the manhood, and the life!"

XX.

THREE WITNESSES.

IN Prague there is an ancient Synagogue, the interior of which is black with the mould and dust of seven centuries. There is a tradition that at some unknown point in it the holy name of Jahve is written, and, for fear of its obliteration, no cleansing or sweeping, however slight, has been permitted, until now the Synagogue has become a show-place of accumulated dirt, which tourists pass through with torches. This ancient structure is but a too faithful symbol of temples which preserve the superstitions of ages through fear that, if some holy name or creed be touched, religion and morality will suffer.

Early in the last generation three Jewish boys—Israel, Jacob, and Henoch—were seated together in this Synagogue on a Saturday morning, awaiting the beginning of service. They were of different families, but playmates. No person was near them, and,

oblivious of the traditional prohibitions, they began to amuse themselves by scraping off with their knives an inch of the black mould, here and there, to see what wood or stone was beneath. The Rabbi, happening to pass at the time, cried out with horror at the sacrilege, and said, "The curse of Heaven may fall on you for that act!"

The terrified lads put up their knives. Some neighbours who heard the voice of the angry Rabbi, but not his exact words, reported that he had said, "May the curse of Heaven fall on you for that act!" And this was the form in which the story was whispered about. Gradually a small saga grew up among the Jews of Prague about these three boys. They were regarded with an evil eye, under which their prospects suffered blight; they were supposed to be under some mysterious doom, they were avoided, and their families suffered much distress. The venerable Rabbi, repenting of his hasty words, tried to disabuse the minds of his congregation as to what he had said; but he was unable to undo what had been done. As the three advanced towards youth, the prejudices against them, and the belief that a doom overhung them, made their lives so miserable, that they desired to leave Prague altogether, and their parents thought this the best course. The families were in good circumstances, and

the young men went off fairly well educated and with some means. They resolved to emigrate to different regions.

Jacob went to Northern Germany. He entered a university there and succeeded in his studies. Animated by the hope of doing so well in life that his parents might ultimately have the happiness of seeing the prejudices of their neighbours disappear, he presently excelled all other students. He became a favourite with the professors. But this excited the jealousy of other students. These conspired against him, and one of their best swordsmen was appointed to pick a quarrel with him. The quarrel came; Jacob was challenged; in the duel he received an ugly wound, which deprived him of one eye, disfigured him, and injured his health. These troubles gradually affected his nerves to such an extent that his mind was partially affected. He began to suspect that there might be some truth in the belief of the neighbours in Prague, that he had fallen under a divine curse for having cleaned an inch of the old Synagogue-wall. This dread grew upon him to such an extent that, from having been a courageous youth, he became timid. Whenever he went out at night he seemed to be confronted by the student with whom he had fought the duel. He began to be looked upon

as an uncanny person by the common people in the city where he dwelt. Some even hustled him on the street, and the Christian boys sometimes threw refuse at the miserable man. He was one evening purposely tripped by some one and suffered a severe fall, which lamed him. Amid the shadows that darkened his room, which had gradually become dingy through poverty, he imagined that, like the patriarch after whom he was named, he had wrestled with a dark phantom, which, however, had prevailed against him. The curse seemed to be fixed upon him irremissibly. The accumulated filth of the old Synagogue of Prague had carried with it the accumulated superstitions of ages; his childish attempt to clear away a little of that visible mould had been vain, and he was now equally helpless to free any smallest space of his own mind from hereditary beliefs in dooms, spectres spells. Thus he wandered, limping, miserable, amic Christian scoffs and Jewish suspicions, and so h wanders this day.

The second of the lads that left Prague, Israel, cam to England, where he was well educated. He thougl over this Prague incident carefully, and came to fe a certain contempt for a Synagogue which so jealousl cherished all its dirt. He found it written in tl Talmud that "next to godliness is cleanliness," ar

began to perceive that the filth he had tried to scrape off was a type of the irrational usages and petty exactions which had overlaid the religion of his race. He had united himself to a Synagogue in London which was kept fair and beautiful; but, as time wore on, he found that around the good hearts and fine minds of the English Jews there were walls on which had gathered the repulsive dust and dirt of ages transmitted from ancient Syria. So Israel resolved that he would make good the promise of his boyish knife, and clear away some of the spiritual mould from English Judaism. His attempts at reform awakened the ire of Wardens, the hostility of Rabbins, and the opposition of a wealthy Semitic caste. Israel still believed in Jahve, and in the fundamental doctrines of the Jewish faith; he believed that if Judaism could be freed from its antiquarian walls it must lead the world. But he struggled in vain for years to secure from the chiefs of the Synagogues any modification of their usages. Furthermore, his efforts in this direction began to tell seriously upon his personal prospects. He had studied law, been admitted to the bar, and for a time found some employment from his co-religionists; but after it was discovered that he was endeavouring to interfere with the traditional usages of the Synagogue, he soon

found himself without clients, and with but a few friends—these being of Christian families.

One evening Israel went to a theatre in London to witness the performance of the *Merchant of Venice*. He was much impressed by an incident of the Bible used by Shylock as a parable, wherein Jacob stuck wands before the ewes in breeding-time, and secured parti-coloured lambs, which, according to Laban's agreement, were all to fall to his (Jacob's) part. Shylock says :

> "This was a way to thrive, and he was blest ;
> And thrift is blessing, if men steal it not."

The Christian Antonio must needs accept the "holy witness" of a book infallible to him and Shylock alike, and says that the result so good for Jacob was "sway'd and fashioned by the hand of Heaven." Israel went away from the theatre to his poor room, and bethought him that, great as was the wealth and power of a few Jews, the parti-coloured lambs had somehow fallen to the Christian lot. Was the "hand of Heaven" in this? If the declaration of Jahve of old that his approval should be manifest in blessings, his disapproval in cursings, were faithful, could there be any doubt where the divine approbation rested in England? Was Houndsditch the seal of Jahve's benedic-

tion on his people? or was not Belgravia rather the expression of his smile? Houndsditch and Belgravia alike appealed to Jahve; to which had he sent the multitude of spring lambs and the plenteous wool?

The germ that fell into Israel's mind at the theatre gradually grew. He presently found that the traditions of Judaism attained their real power and glory in Christianity. In the end he was baptized; he was speedily surrounded by troops of friends. He possessed brilliant powers, and became eminent in literary and political life. Even his former co-religionists were inclined to utilise him, now that he no longer attempted to use his pen-knife on their mouldy customs. He was able to serve them in many ways, they were willing to repay his services; and, thus, assisted by the race which gained prestige through his genius without thé danger of it, and by the Christian community which saw in him a triumph of Christ, he became a great minister of State and a favourite in Palaces. And such he is to this day.

The third of the three youths who left Prague, Henoch, wandered restlessly through Asia and Europe —then came to France. He also was a man of brilliant powers, and for some time kept up his friendship with young Israel in London. In the course of their correspondence, the idea arose in him also of trying to

reform the Synagogue to which he had attached himself in Paris. He failed in the same way, but the effect on his mind was different. He could not recognise a direction from Jahve in the superior thrift of Christendom. He had heard that in America the Jews were in every way more liberal and progressive, and he resolved to emigrate thither. For this purpose he engaged a passage, and repaired to Havre to take his steamer.

On his way to the wharf in Havre, Henoch was passing a small book-stall, when his attention was arrested by the appearance of the bookseller. This was an extremely aged Jew, with long white beard, deep-set eyes, and a queer, antique figure. He sat beside his little stand of dingy fourth-hand books, holding a small volume in his bony fingers, which he perused attentively. Henoch approached him and, speaking in Hebrew, asked him what books he had suitable for a traveller. The old man asked him whither he was travelling, and having received the reply, said: "Ah, that, too, was my dream; but I never got farther than this. I am too old now—too old and too poor—and must leave the New World hope for our younger men. But I sit here, and read about that land of promise, and my dim old eyes follow every ship that sails that way." Henoch asked to look at

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perfect repose and every felicity; and that their ships were ready to bear them to that happy land. The poor Lucayans crowded with laughter and joy to the Spanish ships; the light of the Blessed Isle shone upon their faces. They sailed away from their island home, where they had known only peace and friendship, and were soon all working in dark mines under the slave-driver's scourge. The kid was seethed in its mother's milk.

Henoch read and re-read this tragic history, and looked out over the sea westward. What a fearful fate was that of hearts that followed a dream of paradise which led them into slavery and despair! But slavery, what is it? Is it only the subjection of one will to another? or bondage of the body to toil for others? May there not be islanders, even amid continents, following dreams of paradise, and of clasping their ancestral dead, into spiritual slavery, into a living entombment among skeletons and simulacra of things for ever turned to dust?

In the vision of Henoch there arose a memory of the ancient Synagogue at Prague. His eyes filled with tears as he recalled the dear and tender faces that he had seen there. His kind father, his gentle mother, the good-hearted neighbours, the once happy circle of playmates—how fair and peaceful that Lucaya had

been! But it was all at the mercy of a bit of dirt come down from the thirteenth century, consecrated by awe of four letters of a dead language. Under that spell kindly hearts had turned to stone, suspicions arisen, fear and dread, and from the ruin of a happy home he had been sent to wander through the world. The dream of an ancestral paradise had made that blackened Synagogue as dark a mine as any in which the discoverers of the New World set the islanders to toil; it had imprisoned the Jewish genius and chained the Jewish heart.

One morning, when his thought was full of these reflections, and the book received from the ancient Jew at Havre was open before him, Henoch caught his first sight of the New World, radiant in the sunshine. He resolved that into that land of fresh opportunity he would carry no dogma or custom which rested upon tradition or authority. In that land he saw the human race given a fresh opportunity, and he also would begin again. The Old World had followed its dreams of heaven through massacres and martyrdoms into a dreary and endless routine of wrong, which found its fit symbol in that fable his experience could well interpret, of an eternal Wanderer.

His own race had been mainly responsible for that fatal misdirection of the energies and enthusiasm of

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